United Nations E/CN.6/2018/19

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
26 March 2018

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women
Sixty-second session
12–23 March 2018
Agenda item 3
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

Innovative data approaches for measuring progress on gender equality and women's empowerment

Chair's summary

1. On 16 March 2018, the Commission on the Status of Women held an interactive expert panel on the theme "Innovative data approaches for measuring progress on gender equality and women's empowerment". The meeting was chaired by Vice-Chair of the Commission (Kenya), Koki Muli Grignon. The panellists were: Head of Statistics and Information of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Steve MacFeely; member of the Gender Statistics Working Group of the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia, Jaime Sebastian Lobo Tovar; Deputy Director of the non-governmental organization IT for Change, Nandini Chami; Senior Manager for Africa of the World Wide Web Foundation, Nnenna Nwakanma; and co-chair of the Committee on Statistical Capacity-building of the International Statistical Institute, Irena Krizman. Contributions to the discussion included interventions from nine Member States and six civil society organizations.

2. Participants of the interactive expert panel identified ways in which innovative approaches could be used to close critical data gaps in measuring gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. They also identified the opportunities and challenges that arise from the use of non-traditional data sources, particularly big data, for monitoring the gender-responsive implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and highlighted priority areas for future actions.

Innovations in the collection, availability and use of gender statistics

3. Owing, on the one hand, to rapid advances in computing and greater demand for high-quality statistics, and, on the other hand to reduced budgets, alternative data sources such as big data are increasingly used by national statistical agencies. Governments, businesses and civil society organizations to improve the collection,

18-04760 (E) 270418

Please recycle

reporting, analysis and dissemination of more timely and relevant gender statistics. This is reflected in the increasing use of non-traditional data sources, such as geospatial information, credit card transactions and records from mobile phone usage which can help to improve the understanding of key aspects of girls' and women's lives.

4. Steps are also increasingly being taken to address the limitations of using traditional survey and census data and to optimize data collection processes, especially through the use of satellite imagery, web scraping and administrative data. These developments create a need to institutionalize the use of non-traditional data sources across national statistical systems in order to improve the production of statistics and fill critical knowledge gaps in relation to certain aspects, such as violence against women and the situation of specific groups of women, including women and girls with disabilities, and indigenous and rural women and girls.

Opportunities and challenges of big data for addressing data gaps

5. Participants underscored the potential of big data to provide high-quality, timely and reliable data to complement official statistics, in an effort to better address data gaps relating to gender. Data derived from big data sources, such as from mobile phone records and Internet activity, in some instances are well suited to capturing detailed and timely information on key indicators concerning the well-being of women and girls that are not always apparent in conventional sources such as household surveys and administrative records. However, it was also emphasized that the use of non-traditional data sources was promising but should not be regarded as a substitute for high-quality statistics produced by national statistical systems.

6. Access to and the use of big data sources was also seen as an increasing challenge for national statistical offices. Issues concerning quality assurance, data ownership, privacy and representativeness were highlighted as key barriers to using big data to inform official statistics. The need to streamline legal and ethical standards in the development of statistical services that use non-traditional data sources, in order to better address privacy and data ownership issues, was also highlighted.

Strengthening data governance in the digital age

7. Participants underscored the need for existing data principles governing the production and use of statistics to be adapted in light of the increasing use of non-traditional data sources. Given the evolving data ecosystem, participants reaffirmed the need to abide by the established Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics governing the production and use of official statistics. Standard-setting initiatives, such as the European Union General Data Protection Regulation, the International Open Data Charter and the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data were highlighted as best practices for expanding existing data principles to govern the use of non-traditional data sources.

8. Participants emphasized that when strengthening data governance in the digital age in support of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, it was important to protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls. That included in particular the right to privacy: individuals' access to their data should be regarded as an extension of the right of access to information, especially in priority areas like health care and education.

9. Participants stressed the need for proper data protection measures to be put in place in order to prevent data misuse or mishandling. Countries highlighted the fundamental role of the United Nations and other international or regional organizations in setting principles and standards to guide collective action around the safe use of big data for development.

Facilitating partnerships with data users and producers

10. Participants underscored the need for strategic partnerships among State and non-State actors to create an enabling environment for the integration and use of new and traditional sources of data. The need to strengthen collaboration among national statistical offices and public and private organizations, in order to facilitate greater access to big data sources and advance the potential of official statistics to inform policies, was also stressed. Creating an enabling environment for data interoperability, which would facilitate access, processing and understanding of different data sources, was critical.

Priorities to advance gender statistics

11. Participants emphasized the need to strengthen capacity-building, in order to allow for the modernization of national statistical systems to collect, produce and disseminate statistics and fill critical gender data gaps using both traditional and non-traditional data sources.

12. Participants highlighted the need for governance mechanisms to better harmonize data produced by government ministries, civil society organizations and research institutions with official statistics produced by national statistical offices.

13. Participants also stressed the importance of open access to data and information in the context of monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals.

E/2018/27-E/CN.6/2018/20

United Nations

Report of the Commission on the Status of Women

Report on the sixty-second session (24 March 2017 and 12–23 March 2018)

Economic and Social Council
Official Records, 2018
Supplement No. 7

Please recycle

Economic and Social Council
Official Records, 2018
Supplement No. 7

E/2018/27-E/CN.6/2018/20

Commission on the Status of Women

Report on the sixty-second session (24 March 2017 and 12–23 March 2018)

United Nations • New York, 2018

Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

ISSN 0252-0117

Summary

At its sixty-second session, the Commission on the Status of Women, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2016/3, considered as its priority theme "Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls". It considered as its review theme "Participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women", evaluating progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions of its forty-seventh session.

Pursuant to the organization and methods of work of the Commission, as set out in Council resolution 2015/6, the session included a ministerial segment comprised of four ministerial round tables, one high-level interactive dialogue among ministers on the priority theme and one high-level interactive dialogue on accelerating the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The session also included two interactive expert panel discussions and a general discussion. The Commission considered its review theme through a series of presentations, made on a voluntary basis, by representatives of 13 Member States from various regions on lessons learned, challenges and achievements in the implementation of the agreed conclusions of its forty-seventh session, which were followed by comments and an interactive dialogue among representatives of 33 countries and organizations that provided comments and posed questions at the invitation of the presenting countries. The Commission did not discuss emerging issues, trends, focus areas or new approaches to questions affecting the situation of women, including equality between women and men.

The Commission adopted agreed conclusions on the priority theme, including to reaffirm existing commitments and set out areas and issues requiring attention in conjunction with the priority theme and a series of actions to be taken by Governments and other stakeholders to:

(a) Strengthen normative, legal and policy frameworks;

(b) Implement economic and social policies for the empowerment of all rural women and girls;

(c) Strengthen the collective voice, leadership and decision-making of all rural women and girls.

The Commission recognized its primary role in the follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and called upon the United Nations system entities, relevant international financial institutions and multi-stakeholder platforms, and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to support efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all rural women and girls.

The work of the Commission on the priority theme and its agreed conclusions constitute an input to the work of the Council and to the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

In addition, the Commission adopted the following:

(a) A resolution entitled "Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women", for action by the Economic and Social Council;

(b) A resolution entitled "Twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women", for action by the Economic and Social Council;

(c) By a recorded vote, a resolution entitled "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women", for action by the Economic and Social Council;

(d) A decision entitled "Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its sixty-second session and provisional agenda and documentation for the sixty-third session of the Commission", for action by the Economic and Social Council;

(e) A resolution entitled "Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts";

(f) A resolution entitled "Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS".

The Commission also decided to take note of the report of its Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women and to include it in the present report.

[3 April 2018]

Contents

Chapter		*Page*
I.	Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention	7
	A. Agreed conclusions of the sixty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women	7
	B. Draft resolutions for adoption by the Council	29
	Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women	29
	Twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women	30
	Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women	31
	C. Draft decision for adoption by the Council	35
	Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its sixty-second session and provisional agenda and documentation for the sixty-third session of the Commission	35
	D. Matters brought to the attention of the Council	37
	Resolution 62/1. Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts	37
	Resolution 62/2. Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS	42
	Decision 62/101. Documents considered by the Commission on the Status of Women	43
II.	Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters	45
III.	Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"	46
	A. Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives	49
	B. Priority theme: challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls	50
	C. Review theme: participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women	52
	D. Action taken by the Commission	54
IV.	Communications concerning the status of women	57
V.	Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions	61
VI.	Provisional agenda for the sixty-third session of the Commission	62
VII.	Adoption of the report of the Commission on its sixty-second session	63

VIII. Organization of the session 64

A. Opening and duration of the session 64

B. Attendance 64

C. Election of officers 64

D. Agenda and organization of work 64

E. Documentation 65

Chapter I

Matters calling for action by the Economic and Social Council or brought to its attention

A. Agreed conclusions of the sixty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women

1. The following agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission are transmitted to the Economic and Social Council in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 68/1 of 20 September 2013 and 70/1 of 21 October 2015, as an input to the work of the Council.

Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls*

1. The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[1] the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly[2] and the declarations adopted by the Commission on the occasion of the tenth, fifteenth and twentieth anniversaries of the Fourth World Conference on Women.[3]

2. The Commission reiterates that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[4] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[5] and the Optional Protocols thereto,[6] as well as other relevant conventions and treaties, such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[7] and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[8] provide an international legal framework and a comprehensive set of measures for realizing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all women and girls, including those living in rural areas, throughout their life cycle.

3. The Commission reaffirms that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of its reviews, and the outcomes of relevant major United Nations conferences and summits and the follow-up to those conferences and summits, have laid a solid foundation for sustainable development and that the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action will make a crucial contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[9] and to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those living in rural areas.

---

* For the discussion, see chap. III.

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[2] General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2005/27 and E/2005/27/Corr.1), chap. I, sect. A; ibid., *2010, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2010/27 and E/2010/27/Corr.1), chap. I, sect. A; and ibid., *2015, Supplement No. 7* (E/2015/27), chap. I, sect. C, resolution 59/1.

[4] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

[5] Ibid., vol. 1577, No. 27531.

[6] Ibid., vol. 2131, No. 20378, and vols. 2171 and 2173, No. 27531; and resolution 66/138, annex.

[7] See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[8] Ibid.

[9] General Assembly resolution 70/1.

4. The Commission also reaffirms the commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls made at relevant United Nations summits and conferences, including the International Conference on Population and Development and its Programme of Action[10] and the outcome documents of its reviews. It recognizes that the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway,[11] the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030,[12] the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,[13] and the New Urban Agenda[14] contribute, inter alia, to the improvement of the situation of rural women and girls. The Commission recalls the Paris Agreement,[15] adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.[16]

5. The Commission also recalls the Declaration on the Right to Development[17] and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.[18]

6. The Commission recognizes the importance of relevant International Labour Organization standards related to the realization of women's right to work and rights at work that are critical for the economic empowerment of women, including those in rural areas, and recalls the decent work agenda of the International Labour Organization and the International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work,[19] and notes the importance of their effective implementation, including in rural areas.

7. The Commission acknowledges the important role played by regional conventions, instruments and initiatives in their respective regions and countries, and their follow-up mechanisms, in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those in rural areas.

8. The Commission emphasizes the mutually reinforcing relationship among achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those in rural areas, and the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It acknowledges that gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls and women's full and equal participation and leadership in the economy are essential for achieving sustainable development, promoting peaceful, just and inclusive societies, enhancing sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and productivity, ending poverty in all its forms and dimensions everywhere and ensuring the well-being of all.

9. The Commission reaffirms that the promotion and protection of, and respect for, the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women and girls, including the right to development, which are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, are crucial for women's economic empowerment and should be mainstreamed into all policies and programmes aimed at the eradication of poverty and women's economic empowerment, and

[10] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.
[11] General Assembly resolution 69/15, annex.
[12] General Assembly resolution 69/283, annex II.
[13] General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex.
[14] General Assembly resolution 71/256, annex.
[15] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.
[16] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.
[17] General Assembly resolution 41/128.
[18] General Assembly resolution 71/1.
[19] International Labour Organization, *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*.

also reaffirms the need to take measures to ensure that every person is entitled to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, and that equal attention and urgent consideration should be given to the promotion, protection and full realization of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

10. The Commission recognizes that rural women's equal economic rights, economic empowerment and independence are essential to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. It underlines the importance of undertaking legislative and other reforms to realize the equal rights of women and men, as well as girls and boys where applicable, to access economic and productive resources, including land and natural resources, property and inheritance rights, appropriate new and existing technology, financial products and services, including but not limited to microfinance, and women's full and productive employment and decent work, and equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, in both agricultural and non-agricultural activities in rural areas.

11. The Commission reiterates that the 2030 Agenda needs to be implemented in a comprehensive manner, reflecting its universal, integrated and indivisible nature, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting each country's policy space and leadership while remaining consistent with relevant international rules and commitments, including by developing cohesive sustainable development strategies to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. The Commission affirms that Governments have the primary responsibility for the follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda at the national, regional and global levels with regard to progress made.

12. The Commission recognizes that progress in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, in particular in rural areas, and the realization of their human rights has been held back owing to the persistence of historical and structural unequal power relations between women and men, poverty, inequalities and disadvantages in access to, ownership of and control over resources, growing gaps in equality of opportunity and limited access to universal health-care services and secondary and post-secondary education, gender-based violence, discriminatory laws and policies, negative social norms and gender stereotypes, and the unequal sharing of unpaid care and domestic work. It stresses the urgency of eliminating those structural barriers in order to realize gender equality and empower rural women and girls.

13. The Commission acknowledges that all rural women and girls often face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization. It respects and values the diversity of situations and conditions of rural women and recognizes that some women face particular barriers to their empowerment. It also stresses that while all women and girls have the same human rights, rural women and girls in different contexts have specific needs and priorities, requiring appropriate responses.

14. The Commission expresses its concern at the fact that 1.6 billion people still live in multidimensional poverty and that nearly 80 per cent of the extreme poor live in rural areas, and acknowledges that progress in the eradication of poverty has been uneven and that inequality has increased. It expresses concern that poverty is a serious impediment to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those living in rural areas, and that the feminization of poverty persists. It emphasizes that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. It acknowledges the

mutually reinforcing links between the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and the eradication of poverty. It stresses the importance of support for countries in their efforts to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions.

15. The Commission also expresses its concern at the fact that many rural women continue to be discriminated against, marginalized and economically and socially disadvantaged owing to, inter alia, their limited or lack of access to economic resources and opportunities, decent work, social protection, quality education, public health, including health-care services, justice, sustainable and time- and labour-saving infrastructure and technology, land, water and sanitation and other resources, as well as to financial services, credit, extension services and agricultural inputs, as well as at the limited financial inclusion faced by rural women.

16. The Commission recognizes the important role and contribution of rural women as critical agents in the eradication of poverty and in enhancing sustainable agricultural and rural development, as well as sustainable fisheries. It underlines that meaningful progress in those areas necessitates closing the gender gap, introducing appropriate gender-responsive policies, interventions and innovations, including in agriculture and fisheries, and women's equal access to agricultural and fisheries technologies, technical assistance, productive resources, land tenure security and access to, ownership of, and control over land, forests, water and marine resources, and access to and participation in local, regional and international markets.

17. The Commission reaffirms the right to food and recognizes the crucial contributions of rural women to local and national economies and to food production and to achieving food security and improved nutrition, in particular in poor and vulnerable households, and to the well-being of their families and communities, including through work on family farms and women-headed farm enterprises. It expresses deep concern that, although women contribute significantly to food production worldwide, women and girls are disproportionately affected by hunger and food insecurity, in part as a result of gender inequality and discrimination. It recognizes the critical role of women in both short- and long-term responses to food insecurity, malnutrition, excessive price volatility and food crises in developing countries.

18. The Commission stresses the importance of investing in gender-responsive, quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including in rural areas, inter alia, infrastructure for safe drinking water and sanitation, energy, transport, water for irrigation, and technology, including information and communications technology, and other physical infrastructure for accessible public services.

19. The Commission reiterates the importance of safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport and roads in facilitating transport linkages on domestic routes and promoting urban-rural connectivity in order to empower women and girls and boost economic growth at the local and regional levels, promote interconnections among cities and villages, peoples and resources and facilitate intraregional and interregional trade.

20. The Commission reaffirms the right to education and stresses that equal access to high quality and inclusive education contributes to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those in rural areas. It notes with concern the lack of progress in closing gender gaps in access to, retention in and completion of secondary and tertiary education and emphasizes the importance of technical and vocational training and lifelong

learning opportunities. It recognizes that new technologies are, inter alia, changing the structure of labour markets and that they provide new and different employment opportunities that require skills ranging from basic digital fluency to advanced technical skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and in information and communications technology, and in this regard, emphasizes the importance of all rural women and girls having the opportunity to acquire such skills.

21. The Commission recognizes that, despite gains in providing access to education, rural girls are still more likely than rural boys, and girls and boys in urban settings, to remain excluded from education, and recognizes also that among gender-specific barriers to girls' equal enjoyment of their right to education are the feminization of poverty, child labour undertaken by girls, child, early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation, early and repeat pregnancies, all forms of gender-based violence in and outside of school, including sexual violence and harassment on the way to and from, and at school, the lack of safe and adequate sanitation facilities, the disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work, and gender stereotypes and negative social norms that lead families and communities to place less value on the education of girls than that of boys.

22. The Commission reaffirms the right of every human being to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, without distinction of any kind, and recognizes that its full realization is vital for women's and girls' lives and well-being and for their ability to participate in public and private life, and that it is crucial for achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls, including in rural areas. It recognizes that targeting and eliminating the root causes of gender inequality, discrimination, stigma and violence in health-care services, including the unequal and limited access to public health services, is important for all women and girls, including those living in rural areas and especially those who are vulnerable or in vulnerable situations.

23. The Commission emphasizes the need to accelerate progress towards the goal of universal health coverage that comprises universal and equitable access to gender-responsive, quality health services and quality, essential, affordable and effective medicines for all, including for rural women and girls, and that it is critical to promote physical and mental health and well-being, especially through primary health care, health services and social protection mechanisms, including the promotion thereof through community outreach and private sector engagement and with the support of the international community. It stresses the importance of strengthening health systems in terms of availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality in order to better respond to the needs of all women and girls, including those living in rural areas, and enabling the active participation of rural women in the design and implementation of health systems.

24. The Commission expresses its deep concern that, as a result of the lack of or limited access to essential health-care services and information and limited agency over their own lives, rural women experience significant disparities in health, including reproductive health outcomes, such as higher rates of maternal and infant mortality and morbidity and obstetric fistula, as well as more limited options for family planning, than women in urban areas. It expresses further concern that those disparities are exacerbated by multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

25. The Commission strongly condemns all forms of violence against all women and girls, which is rooted in historical and structural inequality and

unequal power relations between men and women. It reiterates that violence against women and girls in all its forms and manifestations in public and private spheres, including sexual and gender-based violence, domestic violence and harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, are pervasive, underrecognized and underreported, particularly at the community level. It expresses deep concern that women and girls in rural and remote areas may be particularly vulnerable to violence because of multidimensional poverty, limited or a lack of access to justice, to effective legal remedies and services, including protection, rehabilitation, and reintegration, and to health-care services. It re-emphasizes that violence against women and girls is a major impediment to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, including those living in rural areas, and violates and impairs or nullifies their full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

26. The Commission recognizes that sexual harassment is a form of violence and a violation and abuse of human rights and impedes the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those living in rural areas.

27. The Commission also recognizes the contribution of rural families to sustainable development and that the sharing of family responsibilities creates an enabling family environment for the empowerment of all women and girls, including those in rural areas, and that women and men make a significant contribution to the welfare of their families and communities.

28. The Commission acknowledges the benefit of implementing family-oriented policies aimed at, inter alia, achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, the full participation of women in society, work-family balance and the self-sufficiency of the family unit and recognizes the need to ensure that all social and economic development policies are responsive to the changing needs and expectations of rural families in fulfilling their numerous functions and that the rights, capabilities and responsibilities of all family members are respected.

29. The Commission recognizes that rural women and girls undertake a disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work and that such uneven distribution of responsibilities is a significant constraint on women's and girls' completion of, or progress in, education and training, on women's entry and re-entry and advancement in the paid labour market and on their economic opportunities and entrepreneurial activities, and can result in gaps in social protection, pay and pensions. It also recognizes that addressing attitudes and social norms by which women and girls are regarded as subordinate to men and boys at the household and community levels creates an enabling environment for the social and economic empowerment of all rural women and girls. The Commission stresses the need to recognize and adopt measures to reduce and redistribute the disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work by promoting the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men within the household and by prioritizing, inter alia, infrastructure development, social protection policies and accessible, affordable and quality social services, including care services, childcare, maternity, paternity or parental leave.

30. The Commission expresses its deep concern about slow or stagnant economic growth and development, the rising inequalities within and among countries, volatile food and energy prices, continuing food and energy insecurity, the remaining effects of the world financial and economic crises, water scarcity, epidemics, demographic changes, unplanned and rapid urbanization of

populations, the insufficient investment in development in rural areas, unsustainable fisheries practices and use of marine resources, natural hazards, natural disasters and environmental degradation, and the increasing challenges caused by humanitarian emergencies, displacement, armed conflicts and the adverse impacts of climate change, all of which are exacerbating disadvantages, vulnerabilities and inequalities that rural women and men, girls and boys and their families face.

31. The Commission recognizes that globalization presents both challenges and opportunities for women's economic empowerment, including rural women. It also recognizes that there is a need to make broad and sustained efforts to ensure that globalization is fully inclusive and equitable for all, including rural women and girls, and becomes an increasingly positive force for women's economic empowerment.

32. The Commission notes with great concern that millions of people, including women and girls living in rural areas, are facing famine or the immediate risk of famine or are experiencing severe food insecurity in several regions of the world, and noting that armed conflicts, drought, poverty and the volatility of commodity prices are among the factors causing or exacerbating famine and severe food insecurity and that additional efforts, including international support, are urgently needed to address this, including in response to urgent United Nations humanitarian appeals for emergency aid and urgent funding.

33. The Commission is deeply concerned that climate change poses challenges for poverty eradication and the achievement of sustainable development, and that owing to gender inequalities, rural women and girls, especially in developing countries, including small island developing States, are often disproportionately affected by the adverse impacts of climate change, extreme weather events and natural disasters and other environmental issues, including land degradation, desertification, deforestation, sand and dust storms, persistent drought, sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification. It recalls the Paris Agreement and that the parties thereto acknowledged that they should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider gender equality, the empowerment of women and intergenerational equity and, in this context, also recalls the adoption of a gender action plan by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its twenty-third session.[20] It acknowledges the necessity for every person, including women and girls in rural areas, of present and future generations to have access to an environment adequate to their health, well-being and the critical importance of ensuring such access for the empowerment of rural women and girls and the sustainable development and resilience of rural communities.

34. The Commission recognizes the impact of armed conflict on rural women and girls and the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts and in peacebuilding and, in this regard, stresses the importance of the full, effective and meaningful participation of women, including by increasing their role in peace processes, as well as in decision-making in efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and reiterates the importance of engaging men and boys as partners in promoting such participation.

[20] FCCC/CP/2017/11/Add.1, decision 3/CP.23

35. The Commission also stresses the importance of strengthening the voice, agency, participation and leadership of rural women and girls, and the full, equal and effective participation of women at all levels of decision-making. It recognizes the critical role played by rural women's civil society organizations, trade unions, enterprises and cooperatives in gathering, uniting and supporting rural women in all spheres.

36. The Commission recognizes that indigenous women and girls living in rural and remote areas, regardless of age, often face violence and higher rates of poverty, limited access to health-care services, information and communications technology, infrastructure, financial services, education and employment, while also recognizing their cultural, social, economic, political and environmental contributions, including their contributions to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

37. The Commission expresses its concern at the fact that women and girls with disabilities, particularly those living in rural and remote areas, experience stigmatization and an increased risk of violence, exploitation and abuse, including sexual violence and abuse, compared to those without disabilities, and that they face a lack of accessible and inclusive services in rural areas, limited access to justice and equal recognition before the law, as well as limited opportunities for productive employment and decent work, for participation in political and public life, for living independently and for inclusion in their communities, and limited freedom to make their own choices.

38. The Commission recognizes the important contribution of rural women and girls of African descent to the development of societies and the promotion of mutual understanding and multiculturalism, bearing in mind the programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2024).[21]

39. The Commission also recognizes that the positive contribution of rural women migrants has the potential to foster inclusive growth and sustainable development in their countries of origin, transit and destination, underlines the value and dignity of their labour, in all sectors, including in care and domestic work, and encourages efforts to improve public perceptions of migrants and migration and recalls the need to address the special situation and vulnerability of rural migrant women and girls, particularly those who are employed in the informal economy and in less skilled work.

40. The Commission further recognizes the contributions of older rural women, including widowed women, to households and communities, especially in cases where they are left behind by migrating adults, or as a result of other socioeconomic factors, to assume childcare, household and agricultural responsibilities.

41. The Commission acknowledges the important role of national mechanisms for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, the relevant contribution of national human rights institutions, where they exist, and the important role of civil society in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those living in rural areas, as well as in advancing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

[21] General Assembly resolution 69/16, annex.

42. The Commission welcomes the major contributions made by civil society, including women's and community-based organizations, feminist groups, women human rights defenders, girls' and youth-led organizations and trade unions in placing the interests, needs and visions of women and girls, including those living in rural areas, on local, national, regional and international agendas, including the 2030 Agenda. It also recognizes the importance of having an open, inclusive and transparent engagement with civil society in the implementation of measures to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

43. The Commission reaffirms the importance of significantly increasing investments to close resource gaps for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including rural women and girls, through, inter alia, the mobilization of financial resources from all sources, including domestic and international resource mobilization and allocation, the full implementation of official development assistance commitments and combating illicit financial flows, so as to build on progress achieved and strengthen international cooperation, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, bearing in mind that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation.

44. The Commission recognizes the importance of a conducive external environment in support of national efforts towards the economic empowerment of women, through promoting the control, ownership, management and participation of rural women in all sectors and levels of the economy, which includes the mobilization of adequate financial resources, capacity-building and the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, which in turn would enhance the use of enabling technologies to promote women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment.

45. The Commission also recognizes the importance of fully engaging men and boys, as agents and beneficiaries of change, and as strategic partners and allies in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those in rural areas.

46. The Commission urges governments at all levels and as appropriate, with the relevant entities of the United Nations system and international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates and bearing in mind national priorities, and invites civil society, inter alia, women's organizations, including rural women's organizations, producer, agricultural and fisheries organizations, youth-led organizations, feminist groups, faith-based organizations, the private sector, national human rights institutions, where they exist, and other relevant stakeholders, as applicable, to take the following actions:

Strengthen normative, legal and policy frameworks

(a) Take action to fully implement existing commitments and obligations with respect to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and the full and equal enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, so as to improve their lives, livelihoods and well-being;

(b) Consider ratifying or acceding to, as a matter of particular priority, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Optional Protocols thereto, limit the extent of any reservations, formulate any such reservations as precisely and as narrowly as possible to ensure that no reservations are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Conventions,

review their reservations regularly with a view to withdrawing them, withdraw reservations that are contrary to the object and purpose of the relevant Convention and implement the Conventions fully by, inter alia, putting in place effective national legislation and policies;

(c) Design and implement national policies and legal frameworks that promote and protect the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by all women and girls, including those living in rural areas, and create an environment that does not tolerate violations or abuses of their rights, including those involving domestic violence, sexual violence and all other forms of gender-based violence and discrimination;

(d) Enact legislation and undertake reforms to realize the equal rights of women and men, and, where applicable, girls and boys, to access natural resources and economic and productive resources, including access to, use of, ownership of and control over land, property and inheritance rights, including diverse types of land tenure, appropriate new technology and financial services, such as credit, banking and finance, including but not limited to microfinance, as well as equal access to justice and legal assistance in this regard, and ensure women's legal capacity and equal rights with men to conclude contracts;

(e) Enact legislation to promote women's, including rural women's, land registration and land title certification, regardless of their marital status, and address practices and stereotypes that undermine their land rights, including in the context of customary and traditional systems, which often govern land management, administration and transfer in rural areas;

(f) Eliminate all forms of discrimination against all women and girls, including in rural areas, and implement targeted measures to address, inter alia, the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, and the marginalization women and girls face, through the development, where needed, and the adoption of laws and comprehensive policy measures, their effective and accelerated implementation and monitoring, and the removal, where they exist, of discriminatory provisions in legal frameworks, including punitive provisions, and setting up legal, policy, administrative and other comprehensive measures, including temporary special measures as appropriate, to ensure women's and girls' equal and effective access to justice and accountability for violations of the human rights of women and girls, and ensure that the provisions of multiple legal systems, where they exist, comply with international human rights obligations;

(g) Eliminate, prevent and respond to all forms of violence against rural women and girls in public and private spaces, through multisectoral and coordinated approaches to investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of violence against rural women and girls and end impunity, and to provide protection and equal access to appropriate remedies and redress, to comprehensive social, health and legal services for all victims and survivors to support their full recovery and reintegration into society, including by providing access to psychosocial support and rehabilitation, access to affordable housing and employment, and bearing in mind the importance of all women and girls living free from violence, such as sexual and gender-based violence, domestic violence, gender-related killings, including femicide, as well as elder abuse, and of addressing the structural and underlying causes of violence against women and girls through enhanced prevention measures, research and strengthened coordination, monitoring and evaluation, by, inter alia, encouraging awareness-raising activities, including through publicizing the societal and economic costs of violence, and work with local communities;

(h) Eliminate harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation and child, early and forced marriage, which disproportionately affect women and girls in rural areas and may have long-term effects on girls' and women's lives, health and bodies, and which continue to persist in all regions of the world despite the increase in national, regional and international efforts, including by empowering all women and girls, working with local communities to combat negative social norms that condone such practices and empowering parents and communities to abandon such practices;

(i) Pursue, by effective means, programmes and strategies for preventing and eliminating sexual harassment against all women and girls, including harassment in the workplace and in schools, and cyberbullying and cyberstalking, including in rural areas, with an emphasis on effective legal, preventive and protective measures for victims of sexual harassment or those who are at risk of sexual harassment;

(j) Integrate a gender perspective into the design, implementation and evaluation of and follow-up to development policies, plans and programmes, including budget policies, where lacking, ensuring coordination between line ministries, gender policymakers, gender machineries and other relevant government organizations and institutions with gender expertise, and appropriate collaboration with the private sector, non-governmental and civil society organizations and national human rights institutions, where they exist, and paying increased attention to the needs of rural women and girls to ensure that they benefit from policies and programmes adopted in all spheres and that the disproportionate number of rural women living in poverty is reduced;

(k) Eliminate barriers and afford equal and effective access by all rural woman and girls to justice, legal remedies and legal support by, inter alia, providing adequate law enforcement and public safety infrastructure, accessible and affordable services, increasing the legal literacy of rural women and girls, such as awareness of and information about their legal rights, including on the existence of multiple legal systems, where they exist, providing legal assistance, gender-responsive training for police and security forces, prosecutors, judges and lawyers and other relevant authorities and officials in rural areas, as appropriate, putting in place mechanisms to ensure accountability and judicial remedies, and mainstreaming a gender perspective into justice systems at all levels to ensure the equal protection of the law for rural women and girls, taking into consideration, inter alia, the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (Bangkok Rules);[22]

l. Guarantee the universal registration of births, including in rural areas, and ensure the timely registration of all marriages for individuals living in rural areas including by removing physical, administrative, procedural and any other barriers that impede access to registration and by providing, where lacking, mechanisms for the registration of customary and religious marriages, bearing in mind the vital importance of birth registration for the realization of the rights of individuals;

Implement economic and social policies for the empowerment of all rural women and girls

(m) Design, implement and pursue gender-responsive economic and social policies that aim to, inter alia, eradicate poverty, including in rural areas,

[22] General Assembly resolution 65/229, annex.

and combat the feminization of poverty, ensure the full and equal participation of rural women in the development, implementation and follow-up of development policies and programmes and poverty eradication strategies, support increased rural employment and decent work, and promote the participation of women at all levels and sectors of the rural economy and in diverse on-farm and off-farm economic activities, including sustainable agricultural and fisheries production;

(n) Pursue macroeconomic policies that support diverse economic activities, including smallholder agricultural production and the food security and improved nutrition of all rural women and girls and their communities by fostering the positive impact and mitigating the negative impact of international investment and trade rules;

(o) Emphasize the need for business enterprises, including transnational corporations and others, to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for human rights abuses in the context of their operations, products or services on the well-being of women and girls in rural areas and provide for or cooperate in their remediation;

(p) Design, implement and pursue fiscal policies that promote gender equality and the empowerment of all rural women and girls by, inter alia, facilitating greater access to social protection and financial and business services, including credit, for women in rural areas, in particular women heads of households;

(q) Refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries;

(r) Mainstream a gender perspective, and include sustainable agricultural and fisheries development issues, in national agricultural and rural development policies, strategies, plans and programmes, thereby enabling rural women to act and be visible as stakeholders, decision makers and beneficiaries, taking into account the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security[23] and the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication;[24]

(s) Strengthen and support the critical role and contributions of rural women, including women farmers and fishers and farm workers, to enhancing sustainable agricultural and rural development, eradicating poverty, achieving food security and improved nutrition and the economic well-being of their families and communities; ensure the equal access of rural women to agricultural technologies that are affordable, durable, sustainable and accessible to women farmers and fishers and farm workers, through investment, the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, and support research and development and integrated and multisectoral policies to improve their productive capacity and incomes, strengthen their resilience, and address the existing gaps in and barriers to trading their products in national, regional and international markets;

[23] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, document CL 144/9 (C 2013/20), appendix D.

[24] Available from www.fao.org/3/a-i4356en.pdf.

(t) Strengthen national, regional and international efforts, as appropriate, to enhance the capacity of developing countries to support rural women farmers, including smallholder farmers, and those in subsistence farming and fisheries, horticulture and livestock to achieve food security and improved nutrition, including through appropriate mechanization in agriculture, sustainable agricultural practices and education and training on vaccination and management techniques and public and private investment to close the gender gap in agriculture and facilitate rural women's access to extension and financial services, agricultural inputs, land, water and irrigation;

(u) Strengthen sustainable production and consumption patterns, including family farming, respecting and protecting traditional and ancestral knowledge and practices of rural women, in particular the preservation, production, use and exchange of endemic and native seeds, and supporting alternatives to the heavy use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides harmful to the health of rural women and girls and their communities;

(v) Invest in and strengthen efforts to empower rural women as important actors in achieving food security and improved nutrition, ensuring that their right to food is met, including by supporting rural women's participation in all areas of economic activity, including commercial and artisan fisheries and aquaculture, promoting decent working conditions and personal safety, facilitating sustainable access to and use of critical rural infrastructure, land, water and natural resources, and local, regional and global markets, and valuing rural women's, including indigenous women's, traditional and ancestral knowledge and contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial and marine biodiversity, for present and future generations;

(w) Ensure integrated food and nutritional support for rural women and girls, including those who are pregnant and breastfeeding, and their access at all times to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food requirements for an active and healthy life;

(x) Invest in the provision of and access to quality, resilient and gender-responsive infrastructure and time- and labour-saving technologies, information and communications technology, safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems, affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy and safe drinking water and sanitation for all, including through technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, to improve the lives, livelihoods and well-being of all rural women and girls;

(y) Promote the leadership of women and their full, effective and equal participation in decision-making on water and sanitation and household energy management to ensure that a gender-based approach is adopted in relation to water and sanitation and energy programmes, through, inter alia, measures to reduce the time spent by women and girls on collecting household water and fuel, and to address the negative impact of inadequate water and sanitation and energy services on the access of girls to education, and to protect women and girls from being physically threatened or assaulted and from sexual violence while collecting household water and fuel and when accessing sanitation facilities outside of their home or practising open defecation;

(z) Commit to encourage urban-rural interactions and connectivity and eliminate geographic and territorial disparities by strengthening gender-responsive sustainable and affordable transport and mobility, technology and communication networks and infrastructure, underpinned by planning instruments with a gender perspective, based on an integrated urban and territorial approach that maximizes the potential of those sectors for enhanced

productivity, social, economic and territorial cohesion, as well as safety and environmental sustainability;

(aa) Optimize fiscal expenditures to extend social protection coverage to all rural women and girls and establish nationally appropriate social protection floors to ensure access to social protection, without discrimination of any kind, and take measures to ensure sustainable, long-term financial support for social protection systems and make information on social protection measures and benefits widely available and accessible to all rural women and girls, bearing in mind that social protection policies play a critical role in reducing poverty and inequality and supporting inclusive growth and contribute to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those living in rural areas;

(bb) Protect and promote the right to work and rights at work of all rural women in both agricultural and non-agricultural employment, taking into consideration international labour standards and national labour laws, including by setting wages that allow for an adequate standard of living, implementing policies and enforcing regulations that promote decent work and uphold the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, and taking measures to address gender-based discrimination, occupational segregation, the gender pay gap and unsafe and unhealthy working conditions;

(cc) Promote the economic empowerment of rural women and the transition of rural women from the informal to the formal economy by improving their skills, productivity and employment opportunities, including through technical, agricultural, fisheries and vocational training, including in financial and digital literacy, and facilitate the entry and re-entry of all rural women, especially young women, into the labour force;

(dd) Encourage and facilitate rural women's entrepreneurship and expand opportunities for their enterprises, cooperatives and self-help groups to diversify and increase their productivity by engaging in sustainable agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture, including mariculture, cultural and creative industries and other areas of economic activity, and improving their access to financing and investment, technology and infrastructure, training and diverse markets;

(ee) Increase trade and procurement from rural women's enterprises, cooperatives and women-owned businesses by building the capacities and skills of rural women, especially young women, to benefit from public and private sector procurement processes, including public food programmes, and fostering their access to local, national and international value chains and markets;

(ff) Take measures to facilitate the financial inclusion and financial literacy of rural women and their equal access to formal financial services, including timely and affordable credit, loans, savings, insurance, and remittance transfer schemes, integrate a gender perspective into finance sector policy and regulations, in accordance with national priorities and legislation, encourage financial institutions, such as commercial banks, development banks, agricultural banks, microfinance institutions, mobile network operators, agent networks, cooperatives, postal banks and savings banks, to provide access to financial products, services and information to rural women, and encourage the use of innovative tools and platforms, including online and mobile banking;

(gg) Recognize, reduce and redistribute the disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work of rural women and girls, as well as their contributions to on farm and off-farm production, by promoting policies and initiatives that support the reconciliation of work and family life and the equal

sharing of responsibilities between women and men, through flexibility in working arrangements without reductions in labour and social protections, and through the provision of infrastructure, technology and public services, such as water and sanitation, renewable energy, transport and information and communications technology, as well as accessible, affordable and quality childcare and care facilities for children and other dependents and maternity, paternity or parental leave, and by challenging gender stereotypes and negative social norms and facilitating men's increased participation in unpaid care and domestic work and family responsibilities, including as fathers and caregivers;

(hh) Take steps to measure the value of unpaid care and domestic work in order to determine its contribution to the national economy, for example through periodic time-use surveys, and to include such measurements in statistics as well as in the formulation of gender-responsive economic and social policies;

(ii) Invest in and strengthen family-oriented policies and programmes in rural areas that provide the necessary support and protection and are responsive to the diverse, specific and changing needs of rural women and girls and their families, as well as address the imbalances, risks and barriers that they face in enjoying their rights and protect all family members against any form of violence, as those policies and programmes are important tools for, inter alia, fighting poverty, social exclusion and inequality, promoting work-family balance and gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls and advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity;

(jj) Promote and respect women's and girls' right to education at all levels, throughout their life cycle, including women and girls living in rural areas and those who have been left furthest behind, by providing universal access to quality education, and to free and compulsory primary and secondary education, ensuring inclusive, equal and non-discriminatory quality education, promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, eliminating female illiteracy, and striving to ensure the completion of early childhood, primary and secondary education and expanding vocational and technical education for rural women and girls, and foster, as appropriate, intercultural and multilingual education for all;

(kk) Eliminate gender disparities and commit to scaling up financing and investments in public education systems to fulfil the right to education for women and girls in rural areas by addressing gender-based discrimination, negative social norms and gender stereotypes in education systems, including in curricula, textbooks and teaching methodologies; to combating gender norms that devalue girls' education and prevent women and girls from accessing education; provide inclusive, safe, non-violent and accessible schools with gender- and disability-sensitive infrastructure, including lighting, and safe, accessible and affordable transportation to school; to maintain separate and adequate sanitation facilities; to train, recruit and retain qualified teachers in rural areas, especially women teachers where they are underrepresented; to support rural women and girls with disabilities at all levels of education and training; to ensure that rural women and girls have equal access to career development, training, scholarships and fellowships, and to promote an effective transition from education or unemployment to decent work and active participation in public life;

(ll) Take steps to promote educational and health practices in order to foster a culture in which menstruation is recognized as healthy and natural and in which girls are not stigmatized on this basis, recognizing that girls' attendance at school can be affected by negative perceptions of menstruation and the lack

of means to maintain safe personal hygiene, such as water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools that meet the needs of girls;

(mm) Ensure that pregnant adolescents and young mothers, as well as single mothers, can continue and complete their education, and in this regard, design, implement and, where applicable, revise educational policies to allow them to remain in and return to school, providing them with access to health care and social services and support, including childcare and breastfeeding facilities and crèches, and to education programmes with accessible locations, flexible schedules and distance education, including e-learning, bearing in mind the important role and responsibilities of, and challenges faced by, fathers, including young fathers, in this regard;

(nn) Intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate violence and sexual harassment against girls at, and on the way to, school by, inter alia, implementing effective violence prevention and response activities in schools and communities, engaging men and boys, educating children from a young age regarding the importance of treating all people with dignity and respect, and designing educational programmes and teaching materials that support gender equality, respectful relationships and non-violent behaviour;

(oo) Develop policies and programmes with the support, where appropriate, of international organizations, civil society and non-governmental organizations, giving priority to formal, informal and non-formal education programmes, including scientifically accurate and age-appropriate comprehensive education that is relevant to cultural contexts, that provides adolescent girls and boys and young women and men in and out of school, consistent with their evolving capacities, and with appropriate direction and guidance from parents and legal guardians, with the best interests of the child as their basic concern, information on sexual and reproductive health and HIV prevention, gender equality and women's empowerment, human rights, physical, psychological and pubertal development and power in relationships between women and men, to enable them to build self-esteem and foster informed decision-making, communication and risk-reduction skills and to develop respectful relationships, in full partnership with young persons, parents, legal guardians, caregivers, educators and health-care providers, in order to, inter alia, enable them to protect themselves from HIV infection and other risks;

(pp) Address the digital divide, which disproportionately affects rural women and girls, by facilitating their access to information and communications technology and science, technology, engineering and mathematics education in order to promote their empowerment and to develop the skills, information and knowledge that are needed to support their labour market entry, livelihoods, well-being and resilience and expand the scope of information and communications technology-enabled mobile learning and literacy training while promoting a safe and secure cyberspace for women and girls;

(qq) Strengthen measures, including resource generation, to improve women's health, including maternal health, by addressing the specific health, nutrition and basic needs of rural women and taking concrete measures to realize the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health for women of all ages in rural areas, as well as quality, affordable, available and universally accessible primary health care and support services;

(rr) Increase financial investments in quality, affordable and accessible health-care systems and facilities and safe, effective, quality, essential and affordable medicines and vaccines for all, as well as health technologies, including through community outreach and private sector engagement, and with

the support of the international community, towards achieving each country's path towards universal health coverage for all rural women and girls;

(ss) Increase investments in a more effective and socially accountable health workforce and address the shortage and inequitable distribution of doctors, surgeons, midwives, nurses and other health-care workers in rural areas, by promoting decent work with adequate remuneration and incentives to secure the presence in rural and remote areas of qualified health-care professionals, enabling safe working environments and conditions, and expanding rural and community-based health education and training and strengthening education for health professionals;

(tt) Take measures to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity, as well as neonatal, infant and child mortality and morbidity, in rural areas and increase access to quality health care before, during and after pregnancy and childbirth to all rural women and girls through interventions such as training and equipping community health workers, nurses and midwives, to provide basic prenatal and postnatal care and emergency obstetric care, inter alia, by providing voluntary, informed family planning and empowering women and communities to identify risk factors and complications of pregnancy and childbirth and facilitate access to health facilities;

(uu) Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences, including universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes, and recognizing that the human rights of women include their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on all matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, as a contribution to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and the realization of their human rights;

(vv) Intensify national and international efforts to improve public health, strengthen health-care systems and increase the availability of motivated, well-trained and appropriately equipped health professionals and health workers, as well as access to health facilities, including access to diagnosis services, and for the prevention, treatment and care of non-communicable and communicable diseases, as well as neglected tropical diseases, by integrating gender-based approaches for the prevention and control of diseases on the basis of data disaggregated by sex, age and other characteristics relevant in national contexts;

(ww) Strengthen efforts to achieve universal access to HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support for all women and girls, including those living in rural areas, living with, at risk of, or affected by HIV and AIDS, including co infections and other sexually transmitted infections, and address their specific needs and concerns without stigma or discrimination, and promote the active and meaningful participation, contribution and leadership in HIV and AIDS responses of women and girls living with HIV and AIDS in rural and remote areas;

(xx) Devise, strengthen and implement comprehensive anti-trafficking strategies that integrate a human rights and sustainable development perspective, and enforce, as appropriate, legal frameworks, in a gender- and age-sensitive manner, to combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in persons, raise public awareness of the issue of trafficking in persons, in particular women

and girls, take measures to reduce the vulnerability of women and girls to modern slavery and sexual exploitation, provide access, as applicable, to protection and reintegration assistance to victims of trafficking in persons and enhance international cooperation, inter alia, to counter, with a view to eliminating, the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation and forced labour;

(yy) Strengthen and build the resilience and adaptive capacity of all rural women and girls to respond to and recover from economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters, humanitarian emergencies and the adverse impacts of climate change, natural disasters and extreme weather events by providing essential infrastructure, services, appropriate financing, technology, and social protection, humanitarian relief, forecast and early warning systems, and decent work for women;

(zz) Develop and adopt gender-responsive strategies on mitigation and adaptation to climate change to support the resilience and adaptive capacities of women and girls to respond to the adverse impacts of climate change, through, inter alia, the promotion of their health and well-being, as well as access to sustainable livelihoods, and the provision of adequate resources to ensure women's full participation in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues, in particular on strategies and policies related to the adverse impacts of climate change, and by ensuring the integration of the specific needs of women and girls into humanitarian responses to natural disasters, into the planning, delivery and monitoring of disaster risk reduction policies and into sustainable natural resources management;

(aaa) Promote and protect the rights of indigenous women and girls living in rural and remote areas by addressing the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and barriers they face, including violence, ensuring access to quality and inclusive education, health care, public services, economic resources, including land and natural resources, and women's access to decent work, and promoting their meaningful participation in the economy and in decision-making processes at all levels and in all areas, while respecting and protecting their traditional and ancestral knowledge, and noting the importance for indigenous women and girls of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;[25]

(bbb) Promote and protect the rights of older women in rural areas by ensuring their equal access to social, legal and financial services, infrastructure, health care, social protection, and economic resources and their full and equal participation in decision-making;

(ccc) Promote and protect the rights of women and girls with disabilities in rural areas, who face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, including by ensuring access, on an equal basis with others, to economic and financial resources and disability-inclusive and accessible social infrastructure, transportation, justice mechanisms and services, in particular in relation to health and education and productive employment and decent work for women with disabilities, as well as by ensuring that the priorities and rights of women and girls with disabilities are fully incorporated into policies and programmes, and that they are closely consulted and actively involved in decision-making processes;

(ddd) Promote and protect the rights of Afrodescendent rural women and girls, including, where applicable the recognition of their lands and territories,

[25] General Assembly resolution 61/295, annex.

and mainstream a gender perspective when designing and monitoring public policies, taking into account the specific needs and realities of rural women and girls of African descent;

(eee) Strengthen the capacity of national statistical offices and other relevant government institutions to collect, analyse and disseminate data, disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, and gender statistics, to support policies and actions to improve the situation of rural women and girls, and to monitor and track the implementation of such policies and actions, and enhance partnerships and the mobilization, from all sources, of financial and technical assistance to enable developing countries to systematically design, collect and ensure access to high-quality, reliable and timely disaggregated data and gender statistics;

(fff) Promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by reaffirming the commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, pursuing policy coherence and an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors and reinvigorating the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development;

(ggg) Take steps to significantly increase investment to close resource gaps, for example through the mobilization of financial resources from all sources, including public, private, domestic and international resource mobilization and allocation, including by enhancing revenue administration through modernized, progressive tax systems, improved tax policy, more efficient tax collection and increased priority on gender equality and the empowerment of women in official development assistance (ODA) to build on progress achieved, and to ensure that ODA is used effectively to accelerate the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls;

(hhh) Urge developed countries to fully implement their respective official development assistance commitments, including the commitment made by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national income for ODA to developing countries and the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of their gross national income for ODA to the least developed countries, and encourage developing countries to build on the progress achieved in ensuring that ODA is used effectively to help meet development goals and targets and help them, inter alia, to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls;

(iii) Strengthen international cooperation, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, bearing in mind that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation, and invite all States to enhance South-South and triangular cooperation focusing on shared development priorities, with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in government, civil society and the private sector, while noting that national ownership and leadership in this regard are indispensable for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls;

Strengthen the collective voice, leadership and decision-making of all rural women and girls

(jjj) Ensure that the perspectives of all rural women and girls are taken into account, and that women, and girls as appropriate, fully and equally participate in the design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of policies and activities that affect their livelihoods, well-being and resilience, and that women and their organizations, and girl- and youth-led organizations, are fully, safely and actively able to participate in the decision-making process, policies and institutions at all levels, including by promoting and protecting the right to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, the right to vote and to be elected as provided by law, as well as to participate in local and self-governing bodies such as community and village councils, and in political parties and other organizations;

(kkk) Mainstream a gender perspective in decision-making processes and the management of natural resources in, inter alia, land, forestry, fisheries, marine and water management bodies, as well as in planning relating to rural infrastructure and services, transportation and energy, leveraging the participation and influence of women in managing the sustainable use of natural resources;

(lll) Protect and promote the rights to freedom of association, peaceful assembly and collective bargaining so as to enable rural women workers and entrepreneurs to organize and join unions, cooperatives and business associations, while recognizing that those legal entities are created, modified and dissolved in accordance with national law and taking into account each State's international legal obligations;

(mmm) Ensure that the perspectives of rural women, and girls as appropriate, are taken into account in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and in humanitarian emergencies and that they effectively and meaningfully participate, on equal terms with men, in the design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of policies and activities related to conflict prevention, peace mediation, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, as well as take into account the perspective of women and girls who are internally displaced and who are refugees; and ensure that the human rights of all rural women and girls are fully respected and protected in all response, recovery and reconstruction strategies and that appropriate measures are taken to eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against rural women and girls in this regard;

(nnn) Ensure that women affected by natural disasters, including those caused by the adverse impacts of climate change, are empowered to effectively and meaningfully participate, on equal terms with men, in leadership and decision-making processes in this regard;

(ooo) Support the effective participation, decision-making and leadership of rural women in enterprises, farmer and fisher organizations, producer cooperatives, trade unions, civil society and other relevant organizations in ensuring a safe and enabling environment, and provide support for those organizations, including by investing in programmes that provide opportunities for rural women and girls to exercise their voice, agency and leadership;

(ppp) Develop and implement policies and strategies that promote rural women's and girls' participation in and access to media and information and communications technology, including by increasing their digital literacy and access to information;

(qqq) Recognize the important role the media can play in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls, including through non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive coverage and by eliminating gender stereotypes, including those perpetuated by commercial advertisements, and encourage training for those who work in the media and the development and strengthening of self-regulatory mechanisms to promote balanced and non-stereotypical portrayals of women and girls, which contribute to the empowerment of women and girls and the elimination of discrimination against and exploitation of women and girls;

(rrr) Support the important role of civil society actors in promoting and protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of rural women; take steps to protect such actors, including women human rights defenders, and to integrate a gender perspective into creating a safe and enabling environment for the defence of human rights and to prevent violations and abuses against them in rural areas, inter alia, threats, harassment and violence, in particular on issues relating to labour rights, the environment, land and natural resources; and combat impunity by taking steps to ensure that violations or abuses are promptly and impartially investigated and that those responsible are held accountable;

(sss) Fully engage men and boys to take an active part in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those in rural areas, and in the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, in both public and private spheres; design and implement national policies and programmes that address the role and responsibility of men and boys and aim to ensure the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men in caregiving and domestic work; transform, with the aim of eliminating, social norms that condone violence against women and girls, and attitudes and social norms by which women and girls are regarded as subordinate to men and boys, including by understanding and addressing such root causes of gender inequality as unequal power relations, social norms, practices and stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination against women and girls; and engage men and boys in efforts to promote and achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls for the benefit of women and men, girls and boys.

47. The Commission recognizes its primary role for the follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in which its work is grounded, and stresses that it is critical to address and integrate gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls throughout national, regional and global reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to ensure synergies between the follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action and the gender-responsive follow-up to the 2030 Agenda.

48. The Commission calls upon Governments to strengthen, as appropriate, the authority and capacity of national mechanisms for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, at all levels, which should be placed at the highest possible level of government, with sufficient funding, and to mainstream a gender perspective across all relevant national and local institutions, including labour, economic and financial government agencies, in order to ensure that national planning, decision-making, policy formulation and implementation, budgeting processes and institutional structures contribute to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including in rural areas.

49. The Commission calls upon the United Nations system entities, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International

Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Food Programme, within their respective mandates, and relevant international financial institutions and multi-stakeholder platforms to support Member States, upon their request, in their efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all rural women and girls.

50. The Commission encourages the international community to enhance international cooperation and to devote resources to developing rural areas and sustainable agriculture and fisheries and to supporting smallholder farmers, especially women farmers, herders and fishers in developing countries, particularly in the least developed countries.

51. The Commission recalls General Assembly resolution 72/181 of 19 December 2017 and encourages the secretariat to continue its consideration of how to enhance the participation, including at the sixty-third session of the Commission, of national human rights institutions that are fully compliant with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Paris Principles),[26] where they exist, in compliance with the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council.

52. The Commission calls upon the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to continue to play a central role in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and in supporting Governments and national women's machineries, upon their request, in coordinating the United Nations system and in mobilizing civil society, the private sector, employers' organizations and trade unions and other relevant stakeholders, at all levels, in support of the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including towards achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.

[26] General Assembly resolution 48/134, annex

B. Draft resolutions for adoption by the Council

2. The Commission on the Status of Women recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I
Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women*

The Economic and Social Council,

Recognizing the significance of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995,

Recalling that the Council, in its resolution 2016/3 of 2 June 2016, requested the Commission on the Status of Women, in order to achieve concrete results in each review cycle, to consider and make a recommendation at its sixty-second session on how best to utilize the year 2020, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, so as to accelerate the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls,

Reiterating the commitment to using all opportunities and processes in 2015 and beyond to accelerate and achieve the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[1] in order to achieve concrete results in each review cycle, and strive for the full realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women by 2030, including through the contribution of a gender perspective to the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[2]

A. Theme for the Commission on the Status of Women in 2020

1. *Decides* that at its sixty-fourth session, in 2020, the Commission on the Status of Women will undertake a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[1] and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,[3] including an assessment of current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and its contribution towards the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development[2] through a gender perspective;

2. *Calls upon* all States to undertake comprehensive national-level reviews of the progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and encourages the regional commissions to undertake regional reviews so that the outcomes of intergovernmental processes at the regional level can feed into the 2020 review to be undertaken by the Commission at its sixty-fourth session;

3. *Strongly encourages* Governments to continue to support the role and contribution of civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations and women's organizations, as well as national human rights institutions where they

* For the discussion, see chap. II.

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[2] General Assembly resolution 70/1.

[3] General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

exist, in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and in this regard calls upon Governments to collaborate with relevant stakeholders at all levels on preparations for the 2020 review so as to benefit from their experience and expertise;

B. Themes for the Commission on the Status of Women in 2021 and beyond

4. *Requests* the Commission at its sixty-fourth session to decide on its future multi-year programme of work;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission at its sixty-fourth session a report containing proposals on the Commission's priority and review themes for 2021 and beyond.

Draft resolution II
Twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women*

The Economic and Social Council,

Recognizing the significance of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995,

Recalling that the Council, in its resolution 2016/3 of 2 June 2016, requested the Commission on the Status of Women, in order to achieve concrete results in each review cycle, to consider and make a recommendation at its sixty-second session on how best to utilize the year 2020, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, so as to accelerate the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls,

1. *Decides* to recommend to the General Assembly that, in order to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, so as to accelerate the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, a one-day high-level meeting of the Assembly be convened in the margins of the general debate of the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, and that the outcome of the high-level meeting take the form of a Chair's summary;

2. *Recommends* that the President of the General Assembly conduct consultations to finalize the organizational arrangements for the high-level meeting of the General Assembly.

* For the discussion, see chap. II.

Draft resolution III
Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women [a]

The Economic and Social Council,

Having considered with appreciation the report of the Secretary-General,[1]

Recalling the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,[2] in particular paragraph 260 concerning Palestinian women and children, the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women,[3] and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[4]

Recalling also its resolution 2017/10 of 7 June 2017 and other relevant United Nations resolutions, including General Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003 on the prevention of armed conflict and Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 and 2122 (2013) of 18 October 2013 on women and peace and security,

Recalling further the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women[5] as it concerns the protection of civilian populations,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[6] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[6] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[7] and reaffirming that these human rights instruments must be respected in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem,

Recalling also the relevant resolutions of the Human Rights Council,

Taking note of the accession by the State of Palestine to several human rights treaties and the core humanitarian law treaties,

Deeply regretting the passage of fifty years since the onset of the Israeli occupation, stressing the urgent need for efforts to reverse the negative trends on the ground and to restore a political horizon for advancing and accelerating meaningful negotiations aimed at the achievement of a peace agreement that will bring a complete end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 and the resolution of all core final status issues, without exception, leading to a peaceful, just, lasting and comprehensive solution of the question of Palestine, and stressing the importance of the inclusion of women in the peace negotiations and peacebuilding processes,

Expressing deep concern about the grave situation of Palestinian women in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, resulting from the severe impact of the ongoing illegal Israeli occupation and all of its manifestations,

[a] For the discussion, see chap. III.

[1] E/CN.6/2018/6.

[2] *Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15–26 July 1985* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

[3] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[4] General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[5] General Assembly resolution 48/104.

[6] See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.

[7] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

Expressing grave concern about the increased difficulties being faced by Palestinian women and girls living under Israeli occupation, including as a result of the continuation of home demolitions, evictions of Palestinians, the revocation of residency rights and arbitrary detention and imprisonment, as well as high rates of poverty, unemployment, food insecurity, inadequate water supply and unsafe drinking water, a sanitation crisis, shortages of electricity and fuel, incidents of domestic violence and declining health, education and living standards, including the rising incidence of trauma and the decline in their psychological well-being, particularly in the Gaza Strip, where a humanitarian disaster continues to severely affect the situation of women and girls,

Deploring the dire economic and social conditions of Palestinian women and girls in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and the systematic violation of their human rights resulting from the severe impact of ongoing illegal Israeli practices, including the forced displacement and transfer of civilians, especially among the Bedouin community, and confiscation of land, particularly in connection with the construction and expansion of settlements and the wall, which continue to constitute a major obstacle to peace on the basis of the two-State solution based on the pre-1967 borders, and the continued imposition of closures and restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, including the permit regime throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which have detrimentally affected their right to health care, including access of pregnant women to health-care services for antenatal care and safe delivery, education, employment, development and freedom of movement,

Expressing grave concern about all acts of violence, intimidation and provocation by Israeli settlers against Palestinian civilians, including women and children, and properties, including homes, mosques, churches and agricultural lands, condemning acts of terror by several extremist Israeli settlers, and calling for accountability for the illegal actions perpetrated in this regard,

Gravely concerned by the tensions and violence over the recent period throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and deploring the loss of innocent civilian life, including among girls and women, as a result of excessive and indiscriminate use of force by Israeli occupying forces,

Condemning the military conflict in and around the Gaza Strip in July and August 2014 and the civilian casualties caused, including the killing and injury of thousands of Palestinian civilians, including hundreds of children, women and elderly persons, as well as the widespread destruction of homes and critical civilian infrastructure, including schools, hospitals, water, sanitation and electricity networks, economic, industrial and agricultural properties, public institutions, religious sites and United Nations schools and facilities, as well as the internal displacement of hundreds of thousands of civilians, and any violations of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law,

Taking note of the report and findings of the independent commission of inquiry established pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution S-21/1,[5] and stressing the need to ensure accountability for all violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law in order to end impunity, ensure justice, deter further violations, protect civilians and promote peace,

Gravely concerned, in particular, by the persisting disastrous humanitarian situation and socioeconomic conditions in the Gaza Strip, including those

[5] A/HRC/29/52

resulting from the Israeli military operations in July and August 2014, as well as the long-term negative impact of Israeli military operations from December 2008 to January 2009 and in November 2012, and the continuing imposition of a blockade consisting of the prolonged closure of border crossings and severe restrictions on the movement of persons and goods, as well as the continued impeding of the reconstruction process by Israel, the occupying Power, which has detrimentally affected every aspect of the lives of the civilian population, especially women and children, in the Gaza Strip,

Stressing the need for measures to be taken to guarantee the safety and protection of the Palestinian civilian population throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, consistent with the provisions and obligations under international humanitarian law,

Stressing also the importance of providing assistance, especially emergency assistance, to alleviate the dire socioeconomic and humanitarian situation being faced by Palestinian women and their families, and recognizing the essential efforts and support being provided by the United Nations agencies and other humanitarian aid organizations on the ground, particularly in response to the grave humanitarian crisis in the Gaza Strip,

Recalling the convening of the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, on 12 October 2014, and urging the timely and full disbursement of pledges for expediting the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process, which is essential for alleviating the distress of Palestinian women and their families,

Expressing grave concern that Palestinian women and girls continue to be held in Israeli prisons or detention centres under harsh conditions, including, inter alia, unhygienic conditions, solitary confinement, extensive use of administrative detention of excessive duration without charge and denial of due process, and noting that women and girls also face gender-specific challenges, including inadequate access to medical care, risks associated with pregnancy and giving birth in prison and sexual harassment,

Reiterating the importance of increasing the role of women in peacebuilding and decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of conflicts as part of efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of all women in the region, and stressing the importance of women's equal participation and involvement in all efforts for the achievement, maintenance and promotion of peace and security,

1. *Reaffirms* that the Israeli occupation remains the major obstacle for Palestinian women with regard to their advancement, self-reliance and integration in the development of their society, and stresses the importance of efforts to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution and to ensure their equal participation and involvement in all efforts for the achievement, maintenance and promotion of peace and security;

2. *Calls upon* the international community, in this regard, to continue to provide urgently needed assistance, especially emergency assistance, and services, bearing in mind, inter alia, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development [7] and national priorities, in an effort to alleviate the dire humanitarian crisis being faced by Palestinian women and their families, in particular for addressing the humanitarian crisis and immense reconstruction

[7] General Assembly resolution 70/1

and recovery needs in the Gaza Strip, and to help in the reconstruction of relevant Palestinian institutions, with the integration of a gender perspective into all of its international assistance programmes, commends the achievements of the Palestinian Government in constructing the institutions of an independent Palestinian State, as confirmed by international institutions, including by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations, and calls for continued support of these efforts;

3. *Calls upon* international donors to fulfil without delay all pledges made on 12 October 2014 at the Cairo International Conference on Palestine: Reconstructing Gaza, in order to expedite the provision of humanitarian assistance and the reconstruction process, which is essential for alleviating the distress of Palestinian women and their families;

4. *Demands* that Israel, the occupying Power, comply fully with the provisions and principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[10] the Regulations annexed to the Hague Convention IV of 18 October 1907, the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, of 12 August 1949,[11] and all other relevant rules, principles and instruments of international law, including the International Covenants on Human Rights,[8] in order to protect the rights of Palestinian women and their families;

5. *Urges* the international community to continue to give special attention to the promotion and protection of the human rights of Palestinian women and girls and to intensify its measures to improve the difficult conditions being faced by Palestinian women and their families living under Israeli occupation;

6. *Calls upon* Israel to facilitate the return of all refugees and displaced Palestinian women and children to their homes and properties, in compliance with the relevant United Nations resolutions;

7. *Urges* the international community to make renewed efforts aimed at advancing and accelerating the conclusion of a peace treaty based on clear parameters and with a defined time frame to attain without delay an end to the Israeli occupation that began in 1967 by resolving all outstanding issues, including all core issues, without exception, for a just, lasting and peaceful settlement of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, in accordance with the internationally recognized basis of the two-State solution, and of the Arab-Israeli conflict as a whole, for the realization of a comprehensive peace in the Middle East;

8. *Requests* the Commission on the Status of Women to continue to monitor and take action with regard to the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,[2] in particular paragraph 260 concerning Palestinian women and children, the Beijing Platform for Action[3] and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century";[4]

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to review the situation, to assist Palestinian women by all available means, including those set out in his report,[1] and to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women at its sixty-third session a report, including information provided by the Economic and

[10] General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).
[11] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, No. 973.

Social Commission for Western Asia, on the gender-specific impact of the occupation and the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

C. Draft decision for adoption by the Council

3. The Commission on the Status of Women recommends to the Council the adoption of the following draft decision:

Report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its sixty-second session and provisional agenda and documentation for the sixty-third session of the Commission*

The Economic and Social Council takes note of the report of the Commission on the Status of Women on its sixty-second session and approves the provisional agenda and documentation for the sixty-third session of the Commission set out below:

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

Documentation

Annotated provisional agenda and proposed organization of work of the Commission on the Status of Women

3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century":

(a) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives:

(i) Priority theme: social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;

(ii) Review theme: women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development (agreed conclusions of the sixtieth session);

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

Report of the Secretary-General on women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development

* For the discussion, see chaps. IV and V.

Report of the Under-Secretary-General Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

Note by the Secretariat containing a discussion guide for the ministerial round tables

(b) Emerging issues, trends, focus areas and new approaches to questions affecting the situation of women, including equality between women and men;

(c) Gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters.

Documentation

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

Report of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the activities of the United Nations trust fund in support of actions to eliminate violence against women

Note by the Secretariat transmitting the outcome of relevant sessions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

4. Communications concerning the status of women.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the list of confidential communications concerning the status of women and responses thereto

5. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions.

Documentation

Letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women

Note by the Secretariat serving as a contribution to the work of the Economic and Social Council

6. Provisional agenda for the sixty-fourth session of the Commission.

7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its sixty-third session.

D. Matters brought to the attention of the Council

4. The following resolutions and decision adopted by the Commission are brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council:

Resolution 62/1
Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts*

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Guided by the purposes, principles and provisions of the Charter of the United Nations,

Guided also by the principles and norms of international humanitarian law, in particular the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949[1] and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977,[2] as well as relevant international standards of human rights, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[3] the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,[4] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,[4] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[5] the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[6] the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment[7] and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted on 25 June 1993 by the World Conference on Human Rights,[8]

Recalling the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[9] recognizing its universal, integrated and indivisible nature, and acknowledging that the 2030 Agenda, inter alia, addresses the elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls, as well as ending all forms of discrimination against all women and girls,

Taking duly into account the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 61/177 of 20 December 2006,[10]

Recalling all its previous resolutions on the release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts,[11] as well as all relevant resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights and the Human Rights Council concerning hostage-taking and General Assembly resolution 61/172 of 19 December 2006,

Recognizing that women and children bear particular vulnerabilities when taken hostage, including sexual violence and reproductive health concerns,

* For the discussion, see chap. III.
[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 75, Nos. 970-973.
[2] Ibid., vol. 1125, Nos. 17512 and 17513.
[3] General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).
[4] See General Assembly resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.
[5] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.
[6] Ibid., vol. 1577, No. 27531.
[7] Ibid., vol. 1465, No. 24841.
[8] A/CONF.157/24 (Part I), chap. III.
[9] General Assembly resolution 70/1.
[10] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2716, No. 48088.
[11] Resolutions 39/2, 40/1, 41/1, 42/2, 43/1, 44/1, 45/1, 46/1, 48/1, 50/1, 52/1, 54/3, 56/1, 58/1 and 60/1.

Recognizing also that everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person and that the taking of hostages is an offence of grave concern to the international community,

Recalling the relevant provisions contained in the instruments of international humanitarian law relative to the protection of the civilian population as such,

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[12] as well as the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[13] and the outcome of the special session of the General Assembly on children, entitled "A world fit for children",[14] including the provisions therein regarding violence against women and children, and reaffirming also the declarations of the Commission on the Status of Women on the tenth,[15] fifteenth[16] and twentieth[17] anniversaries of the Fourth World Conference on Women,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003 on the prevention of armed conflict, and the Security Council resolutions on women and peace and security, as well as the Council resolutions on children and armed conflict and the Council resolutions on kidnapping for ransom and hostage-taking by terrorists,

Recalling also the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime[18] and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,[19] which provides a framework to effectively prevent and combat trafficking in persons, and recalling further the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons,[20]

Expressing grave concern about the growing number of armed conflicts in many regions throughout the world and the human suffering and humanitarian emergencies they cause,

Noting the particular impact that trafficking in persons in situations of armed conflict has on women and children, including their increased vulnerability to sexual and gender-based violence, and expressing solidarity with and compassion for women and children who are trafficked, as noted in, inter alia, the political declaration on the implementation of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons,[21]

---

[12] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[13] General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[14] General Assembly resolution S-27/2, annex.

[15] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2005/27 and E/2005/27/Corr.1), chap. I, sect. A; see also Economic and Social Council decision 2005/232.

[16] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2010, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2010/27 and E/2010/27/Corr.1), chap. I, sect. A; see also Economic and Social Council decision 2010/232.

[17] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2015, Supplement No. 7* (E/2015/27), chap. I, sect. C, resolution 59/1, annex.

[18] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2225, No. 39574.

[19] Ibid., vol. 2237, No. 39574.

[20] General Assembly resolution 64/293.

[21] General Assembly resolution 72/1.

Noting also that women and children who are taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, including in armed conflicts, whether international or non-international, are victims of serious violations or abuses of international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law, which continues to have a negative impact on efforts to put an end to those conflicts and causes suffering to the families of those women and children, and stressing in this regard the need to address the issue from a humanitarian perspective, among others,

Emphasizing that all forms of violence in areas of armed conflict committed against the civilian population as such, including taking women and children hostage, seriously contravene international humanitarian law, in particular as set out in the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949,

Cognizant that States that are parties to an armed conflict have a responsibility not to take hostage and subsequently imprison women and children in armed conflicts and to ensure accountability as regards the implementation of relevant mechanisms, policies and laws in order to protect them, bearing in mind that all parties to a conflict must refrain from hostage-taking,

Concerned that, despite the efforts of the international community, acts of hostage-taking in different forms and manifestations, including those committed by terrorists and armed groups, continue to take place and have even increased in many regions of the world,

Noting with concern the serious threats posed by transnational organized crime in some regions and its increasing links, in some cases, with terrorism, and strongly condemning the incidents of kidnapping and hostage-taking committed for any purpose, including raising funds or gaining political concessions,

Recognizing that addressing the problem of hostage-taking calls for resolute, firm and concerted efforts on the part of the international community, in accordance with international humanitarian law and international human rights law, in order to bring such abhorrent practices to an end and hold perpetrators accountable,

Expressing its strong belief that the rapid and unconditional release of women and children taken hostage in areas of armed conflict will promote the implementation of the noble goals enshrined in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and the outcome of the special session of the General Assembly on children, including the provisions therein regarding violence against women and children,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General,[22]

1. *Reaffirms* that hostage-taking, wherever and by whomever committed, is an illegal act aimed at the destruction of human rights and is, under any circumstances, unjustifiable;

2. *Condemns* all violent acts committed against the civilian population as such, in violation of international humanitarian law in situations of armed conflict, and calls for an effective response to such acts, in particular the immediate release of women and children taken hostage, including those

[22] E/CN.6/2018/7

subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts, including by strengthening international cooperation in the field;

3. *Also condemns* the acts committed in the context of hostage-taking, in particular torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, murder, rape and other forms of sexual violence, and trafficking in women and children, including for the purpose of slavery, and deplores their consequences;

4. *Urges* States that are parties to an armed conflict to take all measures necessary, in a timely manner, to determine the identity, fate and whereabouts of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts, and to the greatest possible extent, to provide their family members, through the appropriate channels, with all relevant information they have on their fate and whereabouts;

5. *Invites* States, in this regard, to adopt a comprehensive approach, including all appropriate legal and practical measures and coordination mechanisms;

6. *Recognizes* the need for the collection, protection and management of information on women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts, according to international and national legal norms and standards, and urges States to cooperate with each other and with other appropriate actors working in this area by, inter alia, providing all relevant and appropriate information;

7. *Strongly urges* all parties to armed conflicts to respect fully the norms of international humanitarian law and to take all measures necessary for the protection of the civilian population as such, including measures to prevent and combat acts of hostage-taking;

8. *Urges* all parties to armed conflicts to provide safe, unimpeded access to humanitarian assistance for those women and children, in accordance with international humanitarian law;

9. *Also urges* all parties to armed conflicts to cooperate fully with the International Committee of the Red Cross and, where relevant, with national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, in establishing the fate and whereabouts of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned;

10. *Stresses* both the need for increased accountability and the responsibility of all States to prosecute or bring to justice, in accordance with international law, those responsible for war crimes, including those crimes involving hostage-taking and sexual violence;

11. *Also stresses* the need to address the issue of the release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts, also as part of peace processes, with reference to all justice and rule of law mechanisms, on the basis of transparency, accountability and public involvement and participation;

12. *Emphasizes* the importance of exchanging objective, reliable and impartial information, including through improved analysis and dissemination of data disaggregated by sex and age, on hostages, verifiable by relevant international organizations, in facilitating their release, and calls for assistance, as appropriate, to those organizations in this regard;

13. *Welcomes* the progress made in the release of women and children taken hostage in situations of armed conflicts;

14. *Highlights* the importance of the rehabilitation and reintegration of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts, as well as children born in captivity, recognizing their particular vulnerability to violence, including sexual violence, in those situations, and urges the concerned States to take all measures practically possible to this end;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in the context of the present resolution, to continue to widely disseminate information, in particular relating to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General and all relevant international organizations to use their capabilities and undertake efforts to facilitate the immediate release of women and children who have been taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned;

17. *Invites* the special rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council, within their respective mandates, as well as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, to continue to address the issue of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts and its consequences;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on the Status of Women at its sixty-fourth session a comprehensive report covering all aspects of the present resolution, including relevant practical recommendations to address issues relating to the release of women and children taken hostage in armed conflicts, taking into account the information provided by States and relevant international organizations;

19. *Decides* to consider the question at its sixty-fourth session.

Resolution 62/2
Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS*

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[1] and the outcomes of its reviews, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[2] the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,[3] the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,[4] the key actions for its further implementation[5] and the outcomes of its reviews, the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[6] the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women,[7] the 2016 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: On the Fast Track to Accelerating the Fight against HIV and to Ending the AIDS Epidemic by 2030,[8] Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 on women and peace and security and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,[9] including the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular the resolve of Member States to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030, as well as its resolution 60/2 of 24 March 2016 on women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS,

1. *Takes note of* the report of the Secretary-General, submitted pursuant to its resolution 60/2;[10]

2. *Reiterates* the continued resolve to achieve the commitments made in resolution 60/2, and urges Member States to accelerate their implementation;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a progress report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Commission on the Status of Women at its sixty-fourth session.

* For the discussion, see chap. III.

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[2] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

[3] General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[4] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[5] General Assembly resolution S-21/2, annex.

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

[7] General Assembly resolution 48/104.

[8] General Assembly resolution 70/266, annex.

[9] General Assembly resolution 70/1.

[10] E/CN.6/2018/8 and E/CN.6/2018/8/Corr.1.

Decision 62/101
Documents considered by the Commission on the Status of Women*

5. At its 12th and 13th meetings, on 21 and 23 March, the Commission on the Status of Women decided to take note of the following documents and to bring to the attention of the Economic and Social Council the Chairs' summaries of the four ministerial round tables, the high-level interactive dialogue among ministers, the high-level interactive dialogue on the priority theme, the interactive dialogue on the review theme and the two expert panel discussions on the priority theme and on the review theme.

Under agenda item 3

Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the normative aspects of the work of the Entity;[1]

Report of the Secretary-General on the challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls;[2]

Report of the Secretary-General on the review of the implementation of the agreed conclusions of the forty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women;[3]

Report of the Secretary-General on women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS;[4]

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the activities of the United Nations trust fund in support of actions to eliminate violence against women;[5]

Note by the Secretariat on the results of the sixty-seventh and sixty-eighth sessions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;[6]

Chairs' summary of the ministerial round tables on good practices in the empowerment of rural women and girls, including through access to education, infrastructure and technology, food security and nutrition;[7]

Chairs' summary of the ministerial round tables on good practices in the empowerment of rural women and girls, including through the prevention of gender-based violence and access to justice, social services and health care;[8]

Chair's summary of the high-level interactive dialogue among ministers on building alliances to achieve gender equality and empower rural women and girls;[9]

Chair's summary of the high-level interactive dialogue on accelerating the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and achieving concrete results by 2020;[10]

Chair's summary of the interactive dialogue on the participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their

* For the discussion, see chaps. III and V.
[1] E/CN.6/2018/2.
[2] E/CN.6/2018/3.
[3] E/CN.6/2018/4.
[4] E/CN.6/2018/8 and E/CN.6/2018/8/Corr.1.
[5] A/HRC/38/3-E/CN.6/2018/9.
[6] E/CN.6/2018/12.
[7] E/CN.6/2018/13.
[8] E/CN.6/2018/14.
[9] E/CN.6/2018/15.
[10] E/CN.6/2018/16.

impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women;[11]

Chair's summary of the interactive expert panel discussion on the role of rural women's land rights and land tenure security in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals;[12]

Chair's summary of the interactive expert panel discussion on innovative data approaches for measuring progress on gender equality and women's empowerment;[13]

Under agenda item 5

Letter dated 11 December 2017 from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women;[14]

Note by the Secretariat on the input to the work of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development.[15]

[11] E/CN.6/2018/17.
[12] E/CN.6/2018/18.
[13] E/CN.6/2018/19.
[14] E/CN.6/2018/10.
[15] E/CN.6/2018/11.

Chapter II

Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

6. The Commission considered agenda item 2 at its 2nd and 13th meetings, on 12 and 23 March. It had before it its annotated provisional agenda and proposed organization of work (E/CN.6/2018/1 and E/CN.6/2018/1/Add.1).

7. At its 2nd meeting, on 12 March, the Commission adopted its provisional agenda and approved its organization of work (see chap. VIII, sect. D), on the understanding that further adjustments would be made, as necessary, during the course of the session.

Action taken by the Commission

8. At its 13th meeting, on 23 March, the Commission had before it a draft resolution entitled "Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women" (E/CN.6/2018/L.6), submitted by the Chair of the Commission, on the basis of informal consultations.

9. At the same meeting, the Commission was informed that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

10. Also at the same meeting, the Commission adopted the draft resolution and recommended it to the Council for its adoption (see chap. I, sect. B, draft resolution I).

11. Also at the 13th meeting, the Commission had before it a draft resolution entitled "Twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women" (E/CN.6/2018/L.7), submitted by the Chair on the basis of informal consultations.

12. At the same meeting, the Secretary of the Commission read out a statement of programme budget implications in connection with the draft resolution.

13. Also at the same meeting, the Commission adopted the draft resolution and recommended it to the Council for its adoption (see chap. I, sect. B, draft resolution II).

Chapter III

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

14. The Commission considered item 3 of its agenda at its 2nd to 13th meetings, from 12 to 23 March. It held a general discussion on the item at its 2nd, 4th to 9th and 12th meetings. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the normative aspects of the work of the Entity (E/CN.6/2018/2);

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls (E/CN.6/2018/3);

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the review of the implementation of the agreed conclusions of the forty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2018/4);

(d) Note by the Secretariat transmitting the discussion guide for the ministerial round tables to be held under the priority theme "Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls" (E/CN.6/2018/5);

(e) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (E/CN.6/2018/6);

(f) Report of the Secretary-General on the release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts (E/CN.6/2018/7);

(g) Report of the Secretary-General on women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS (E/CN.6/2018/8 and E/CN.6/2018/8/Corr.1);

(h) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women on the activities of the United Nations Trust Fund in support of actions to eliminate violence against women (A/HRC/38/3-E/CN.6/2018/9);

(i) Note by the Secretariat on the results of the sixty-seventh and sixty-eighth sessions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (E/CN.6/2018/12);

(j) Statements submitted by non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (E/CN.6/2018/NGO/1-171).

15. At the 2nd meeting, on 12 March, the Chair of the Commission, the Secretary-General, the President of the Economic and Social Council at its 2018 session, Marie Chatardová (Czechia), and the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-second session, Miroslav Lajčák (Slovakia), addressed the Commission.

16. At the same meeting, introductory statements were made by the Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and by the Vice-President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (also on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Food Programme).

17. Also at the same meeting, a joint statement was made by two civil society representatives on behalf of rural women and girls.

18. Also at the 2nd meeting, statements were made by the Chair of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences.

19. At the 2nd meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Egypt (on behalf of the Group of 77 and China), Tunisia (on behalf of the Group of Arab States), Guyana (on behalf of the Caribbean Community) and Brazil (on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries).[16]

20. At the same meeting, statements were made by the observers for the Gambia (on behalf of the Group of African States), Bulgaria (on behalf of the European Union), Slovenia (on behalf of the Group of Friends of Older Persons),[17] the Marshall Islands (on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum) and Thailand (on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations).

21. At the 4th meeting, on 13 March, statements were made by the representatives of Nigeria, Spain, Albania, Liechtenstein, Peru, Estonia, Bahrain, Ghana, Liberia and Kenya.

22. At the same meeting, statements were made by the observers for the Dominican Republic (on behalf of the members of the Council of Women's Affairs Ministers of the Central American Integration System),[18] South Africa (on behalf of the Southern African Development Community), Austria (on behalf of the Human Security Network),[19] Zambia, Gambia, Kiribati, Serbia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Paraguay, Turkey, Finland, the Bahamas, Morocco, Luxembourg, New Zealand, the Dominican Republic, Mozambique, Sierra Leone, Australia, Algeria, Ecuador and Nauru.

23. At the 5th meeting, on 13 March, statements were made by the representatives of Ireland, Qatar, Tunisia, Canada, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Trinidad and Tobago and the Niger.

24. At the same meeting, statements were made by the observers for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Iceland, Uganda, Malta, Afghanistan, Jordan, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Sri Lanka, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Costa Rica, Mali, Angola, Burkina Faso, South Africa, Seychelles, Denmark, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, South Sudan, Ethiopia, France, Cambodia, Switzerland, Panama, Turkmenistan and Malaysia, as well as by the observer for the State of Palestine.

25. At the 6th meeting, on 14 March, statements were made by the representatives of the Congo, Malawi, Kazakhstan, Egypt, Guatemala, Uruguay, Brazil and Israel.

26. At the same meeting, statements were made by the observers for Zimbabwe, Rwanda, Yemen, Senegal, the Comoros, Somalia, Slovenia, Germany, Portugal, Austria, Lithuania, Chad, Sweden, Georgia, Hungary, Argentina, the United Arab

[16] The Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries is composed of Angola, Brazil, Cabo Verde, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tome and Principe and Timor-Leste.

[17] The Group of Friends of Older Persons is composed of Argentina, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Indonesia, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Qatar, Slovenia, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey and Uruguay.

[18] The members of the Council of Women's Affairs Ministers of the Central American Integration System are Belize, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama.

[19] The Human Security Network is composed of Austria, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Panama, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand, with South Africa participating as an observer.

Emirates, Honduras, Czechia, Mauritania, Saudi Arabia, the Philippines, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Greece, Pakistan and Japan.

27. At the 7th meeting, on 14 March, the Chair of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice made an introductory statement.

28. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Mongolia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the United Republic of Tanzania, Colombia, Namibia, India, El Salvador and Belgium.

29. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the observers for Mexico, Slovakia, Togo, Madagascar, Guinea, Singapore, Burundi, Lebanon, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Poland, Nicaragua, Cuba, Iraq, Viet Nam, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Botswana and Oman, as well as by the observer for the Holy See.

30. At the 8th meeting, on 15 March, statements were made by the representatives of Norway, the Republic of Korea, Tajikistan, Chile, China, Equatorial Guinea and the Russian Federation.

31. At the same meeting, statements were made by the observers for Fiji, the Netherlands, Lesotho, Croatia, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Armenia, Andorra, Tonga, Maldives, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Nepal, Samoa, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Bulgaria, Monaco, Montenegro, Myanmar and the Sudan.

32. At the 9th meeting, on 15 March, statements were made by the representatives of Kuwait and Eritrea.

33. At the same meeting, statements were made by the observers for Jamaica, Libya, the United States of America, Azerbaijan, Gabon, Cabo Verde, Timor-Leste and Suriname.

34. Also at the same meeting, statements were made by the observers for the African Union, the International Development Law Organization, the League of Arab States, the Economic Community of West African States, the Commonwealth, the Sovereign Order of Malta and the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

35. At the 9th meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (also on behalf of the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic Commission for Europe, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia and the Regional Commissions New York Office), the International Trade Centre, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, and the United Nations Office for Project Services.

36. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council: Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women; Fundación para Estudio e Investigación de la Mujer; Global Fund for Widows; and Indigenous Information Network.

37. Also at the same meeting, the observers for Japan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea made statements in exercise of the right of reply.

38. At the 12th meeting, on 21 March, a statement was made by the representative of Bangladesh.

39. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council: ACT Alliance — Action by Churches Together, Amnesty International, Associated Country Women of the World, Canadian Federation of University Women, Christian Aid, Coalition against Trafficking in Women, Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, FIAN International, International Federation of Medical Students Associations, International Trade Union Confederation, Lutheran World Federation, Overseas Development Institute, Soroptimist International, The Grail, Royal Commonwealth Society for the Blind, United States National Committee for UN-Women, Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund, Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, and Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries.

A. Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives

Ministerial segment
High-level interactive dialogue on accelerating the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and achieving concrete results by 2020*

40. At the 5th meeting, on 13 March, under the ministerial segment, the Commission held a high-level interactive dialogue on accelerating the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and achieving concrete results by 2020, which was chaired by the Vice-Chair of the Commission (Kenya), who made an opening statement.

41. The representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Canada, China, Eritrea, Qatar, Ireland, the Republic of Korea, Trinidad and Tobago, Colombia and Egypt participated in the ensuing dialogue.

42. The observers for the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ecuador, Hungary, Sweden, Costa Rica, Ukraine, Morocco, Czechia, Italy, Australia, the Dominican Republic and the Philippines also participated.

43. The following guest speakers took part in the dialogue: Special Envoy of the African Union on Women, Peace and Security, Bineta Diop; Director of the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Michael O'Flaherty; Secretary-General, International Organization of la Francophonie, Michaëlle Jean; Special Envoy of the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions, Florence Simbiri Jaoko; Commissioner, Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines, Karen Gomez Dumpit; Deputy Public Defender, Georgian Public Defender's Office, Ekaterine Skhiladze; Chairperson of the Afghanistan Independent Commission on Human Rights, Sima Samar; member of the Working Group on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice, Melissa Upreti; Director of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Liaison Office in New York, Carla Mucavi; Chief of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Liaison Office in New York, Melchiade Bukuru; and the Vice-Chair of the fifty-sixth session of the Commission for Social Development, Bruno Rios Sanchez.

* See the Chair's summary of the high-level interactive dialogue (E/CN.6/2018/16).

B. Priority theme: challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls*

1. Ministerial segment

Ministerial round tables held in parallel

44. At its 3rd meeting, on 12 March, under the ministerial segment, the Commission held four ministerial round tables in parallel meetings on the priority theme, "Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls".

Topic A: Good practices in the empowerment of rural women and girls, including through access to education, infrastructure and technology, food security and nutrition

Round table 1

45. Ministerial round table 1 was chaired by the Minister of Culture of Estonia, Indrek Saar, who made a statement.

46. In the ensuing discussion, statements were made by the representatives of Egypt, Kenya, Liberia, Niger, Norway, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Korea and China, as well as by the observers for Costa Rica, Guinea, Australia, the Dominican Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Paraguay, Angola, Switzerland, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Mali, Cameroon, Portugal and Hungary.

47. The Chair of round table 1 concluded the discussion and made a statement.

Round table 2

48. Ministerial round table 2 was chaired by the Cabinet Secretary for Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs of Kenya, Margaret Kobia, who made an opening statement.

49. In the ensuing discussion, statements were made by the representatives of Ghana, Colombia, Guatemala and Uruguay, as well as by the observers for Afghanistan, Morocco, Ecuador, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Luxembourg, Rwanda, New Zealand, Azerbaijan, Chad, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Indonesia and Romania.

50. The Deputy Executive Director of UN-Women summarized the key issues raised during the discussion.

Topic B: Good practices in the empowerment of rural women and girls, including through the prevention of gender-based violence and access to justice, social services and health care

Round table 3

51. Ministerial round table 3 was chaired by the Presidential Councillor for Gender Equality of Colombia, Martha Ordoñez, who made an opening statement.

52. In the ensuing discussion, statements were made by the representatives of Albania, Liechtenstein, Ireland, Brazil and Spain, as well as by the observers for Turkey, Burkina Faso, Denmark, Finland, Morocco, Sri Lanka, Germany, Uganda, Argentina, Zambia, Mexico and Slovenia.

53. A statement was also made by the observer for the State of Palestine.

* See the Chairs' summary of the ministerial round tables (E/CN.6/2018/13 and E/CN.6/2018/14), of the high-level interactive dialogue among ministers (E/CN.6/2018/15) and of the interactive expert panel discussion (E/CN.6/2018/16).

54. The Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) summarized the highlights of the dialogue.

55. The Chair of round table 3 concluded the discussion and made a statement.

Round table 4

56. Ministerial round table 4 was chaired by the Minister of Administrative Development, Labour and Social Affairs of Qatar, Issa bin Saad Al Jafali Al Nuaimi, who made an opening statement.

57. In the ensuing discussion, statements were made by the representatives of Canada, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago and Kazakhstan, as well as by the observers for Jordan, Malta, France, Zimbabwe, Honduras, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Algeria, Japan, Czechia, Yemen, Sweden, Thailand and Malaysia.

58. The Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund summarized the key issues of the dialogue.

2. Ministerial segment

High-level interactive dialogue among ministers on building alliances to achieve gender equality and empower rural women and girls

59. At its 4th meeting, on 13 March, under the ministerial segment, the Commission held a high-level interactive dialogue among ministers on building alliances to achieve gender equality and empower rural women and girls, which was chaired by the Minister for Equality, Integration and Immigration of Ireland, David Stanton, who made an opening statement.

60. In the ensuing dialogue, the representatives of Liechtenstein, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Brazil, Canada, Trinidad and Tobago, Colombia, Spain, Qatar, Uruguay, Eritrea, the Congo, Egypt and the United Republic of Tanzania participated in the dialogue.

61. The observers for Jordan, Somalia, Zimbabwe, Finland, Hungary, Costa Rica, Australia, Ecuador, Italy, Saudi Arabia, the Dominican Republic, Ukraine, Croatia, Sri Lanka, Yemen, the Philippines, Rwanda, Afghanistan, Mexico, Benin and Morocco, also participated in the dialogue, as did the representative for the European Union.

62. The representatives of the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council also took part in the discussion: Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women, African Women's Development and Communication Network, World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, Fundacion BBVA para las Microfinanzas, Comisión para la Investigación de Malos Tratos a las Mujeres, Centre for Community Economics and Development Consultants Society, Canadian Labour Congress, Youth Bridge Foundation, and World Information Transfer.

3. Interactive expert panel discussion on the role of rural women's land rights and land tenure security in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals

63. At its 10th meeting, on 16 March, the Commission held an interactive expert panel on the role of rural women's land rights and land tenure security in reaching the Sustainable Development Goals, moderated by the Vice-Chair of the Commission (Bangladesh), who made an opening statement.

64. The Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, Alicia Buenrostro Massieu (Mexico), made a statement via video link.

65. Presentations were made by the following panellists: member of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, Naela Gabr; Director of the Board of the International Action Network for Gender Equity and Law, Tzili Mor; Coordinator of Education and Culture of the Indigenous Women's Network on Biodiversity from Latin America and the Caribbean, Yolanda Teran Maigua; Senior Legal Advisor on Gender of the International Development Law Organization, Rea Abada Chiongson; and Head of the Global Urban Observatory Unit (Data and Statistics Unit) in the Research and Capacity Development Branch of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), Robert P. Ndugwa.

66. An interactive discussion ensued, during which the representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the United Republic of Tanzania, Colombia, Kenya and Egypt, as well as the observers for Switzerland, Mexico and the Gambia participated.

67. The representatives of the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council also participated in the discussion: Public Services International, Dones per la Llibertat i Democracia, Non-Governmental Organizations Coordinating Committee, and the Catholic Women's League Australia.

C. Review theme: Participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women*

1. Ministerial segment
National voluntary presentations

68. At its 6th and 7th meetings, on 14 March, in parallel with the general discussions, and at its 8th meeting, on 15 March, the Commission held a series of interactive dialogues at which presentations were made on the review theme, "Participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women".

69. At its 6th meeting, the Vice-Chair of the Commission (Estonia) made opening remarks.

70. At the same meeting, the Assistant Secretary-General/Deputy Executive Director of the Intergovernmental Support, Coordination and Strategic Partnerships Bureau of UN-Women, made an introductory statement.

71. At the 7th meeting, the Vice-Chair of the Commission (Colombia) made opening remarks.

72. At the 8th meeting, the Chair of the Commission made opening remarks.

Presentations by Belgium, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Saudi Arabia, New Zealand and Bulgaria

73. At the 6th meeting, a presentation was made by the representative of Belgium, subsequent to which the presenter responded to comments and questions from the representative of Tunisia and from the observers for Denmark and the representative of the International Organization of la Francophonie.

* See the Chair's summary of the national voluntary presentations (E/CN.6/2018/17) and of the interactive expert panel discussion (E/CN.6/2018/19).

74. At the same meeting, a presentation was made by the observer for Sri Lanka, subsequent to which the presenter responded to comments and questions from the observers for Nepal and Indonesia and from the representative of the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

75. Also at the same meeting, a presentation was made by the representative of Colombia, subsequent to which the presenter responded to comments and questions from the representative of Norway and the observer for Mexico.

76. Also at the 6th meeting, a presentation was made by the observer for Saudi Arabia, subsequent to which the presenter responded to comments and questions from the representative of Bahrain and from the observer for Singapore.

77. At the same meeting, a presentation was made by the observer for New Zealand, subsequent to which the presenter responded to comments and questions from the representative of Canada and from the observers for Australia, Lebanon and Samoa.

78. Also at the same meeting, a presentation was made by the observer for Bulgaria, subsequent to which the presenter responded to comments and questions from the observers for Italy and Armenia.

Presentations by Kenya, Germany, Argentina, the Sudan, Costa Rica, Nigeria

79. At the 7th meeting, a presentation was made by the representative of Kenya, subsequent to which the presenter responded to comments and questions from the observers for Rwanda and South Africa and from the representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

80. At the same meeting, a presentation was made by the observer for Germany, subsequent to which the presenter responded to comments and questions from the representatives of Namibia and China.

81. Also at the same meeting, a presentation was made by the observer for Argentina, subsequent to which the presenter responded to comments and questions from the representative of Brazil and from the observers for Paraguay and Mexico.

82. Also at the 7th meeting, a presentation was made by the observer for the Sudan, subsequent to which the presenter responded to comments and questions from the observers for Morocco and Ethiopia.

83. At the same meeting, a presentation was made by the observer for Costa Rica, subsequent to which the presenter responded to comments and questions from the representative of El Salvador and the observer for Panama.

84. Also at the same meeting, a presentation was made by the representative of Nigeria, subsequent to which the presenter responded to comments and questions from the representative of the United Kingdom and the observer for Morocco.

Presentation by Slovakia

85. At the 8th meeting, a presentation was made by the observer for Slovakia, subsequent to which the presenter responded to comments and questions from the observer for the Netherlands and the representative of Brazil.

86. At the same meeting, the observer for Mali made a statement.

2. Interactive expert panel discussion on innovative data approaches for measuring progress on gender equality and women's empowerment

87. At its 11th meeting, on 16 March, the Commission held an interactive expert panel discussion on innovative data approaches for measuring progress on gender

equality and women's empowerment moderated by the Vice-Chair (Kenya), who made an opening statement.

88. Presentations were made by the following panellists: Head of Statistics of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Steve MacFeely; member of the Gender Statistics Working Group of the National Administrative Department of Statistics of Colombia, Jaime Sebastian Lobo Tovar; Senior Research Associate, IT for Change, Nandini Chami; Senior Policy Manager, World Wide Web Foundation, Nnenna Nwakanma; Co-Chair of the Statistical Capacity-building Committee of the International Statistical Institute, Irena Krizman.

89. An interactive discussion ensued, during which the representatives of Qatar, Canada, China, Eritrea and Namibia participated, as well as the observers for Italy, Uganda, Afghanistan and Côte d'Ivoire.

90. The representatives of the following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council also participated in the discussion: WePower — Women's Electoral Power for the Advancement of Women's Leadership in Israel; Project 1948 Foundation; Imam Ali's Popular Students Relief Society; Fundación BBVA para las Microfinanzas; United States National Committee for UN-Women; and the International Center for Advocates against Discrimination.

D. Action taken by the Commission

1. Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

91. At the 13th meeting, on 23 March, the representative of Egypt, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, taking into account the provisions of General Assembly resolution 52/250 of 7 July 1998, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women" (E/CN.6/2018/L.3).

92. At the same meeting, the Commission was informed that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

93. Also at the same meeting, Turkey joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

94. Also at the 13th meeting, the Commission adopted the draft resolution by a recorded vote of 30 to 4, with 11 abstentions, and recommended it to the Economic and Social Council for its adoption (see chap. I, sect. B, draft resolution III). The voting was as follows:

In favour:

Bahrain, Bangladesh, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Guyana, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Liberia, Malawi, Mongolia, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay.

Against:

Canada, Guatemala, Israel, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Abstaining:

Albania, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Estonia, Ghana, Ireland, Liechtenstein, Norway, Republic of Korea, Spain.

95. Before the vote, statements were made by the representatives of the United Kingdom, Israel, Estonia (also on behalf of Belgium, Ireland and Spain), as well as by the observer for the United States.

96. After the vote, statements were made by the representatives of Canada and Brazil, as well as by the observer for the State of Palestine.

2. Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts

97. At the 13th meeting, on 23 March, the Commission had before it a draft resolution entitled "Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts" (E/CN.6/2018/L.4), submitted by Azerbaijan and Belarus.

98. At the same meeting, the Commission was informed that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

99. Also at the same meeting, Turkey and Armenia joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

100. Also at the 13th meeting, the Commission adopted the draft resolution (see chap. I, section D, resolution 62/1).

3. Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS

101. At the 13th meeting, on 23 March, the Commission had before it a draft resolution entitled "Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS" (E/CN.6/2018/L.5), submitted by South Africa, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Southern African Development Community.

102. At the same meeting, the observer for South Africa made a statement and orally revised operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution by replacing the word "welcomes" by the words "takes note of".

103. Also at the same meeting, the Commission was informed that the draft resolution, as orally revised, contained no programme budget implications.

104. Also at the 13th meeting, Liberia joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, as orally revised.

105. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the draft resolution, as orally revised (see chap. I, section D, resolution 62/2).

4. Agreed conclusions on challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls

106. At the 13th meeting, on 23 March, the Commission had before it the draft agreed conclusions on challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls, as contained in an informal paper and submitted by the Chair of the Commission on the basis of informal consultations and subsequently issued as document E/CN.6/2018/L.8.

107. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the agreed conclusions and decided to transmit them to the Council, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 68/1 of 20 September 2013 and 70/1 of 21 October 2015 (see chap. I, sect. A).

108. After the adoption, statements were made by the representatives of El Salvador (on behalf of Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay), the United Kingdom (on behalf of the European Union), Bahrain (also on behalf of the Group of Arab States), the Islamic Republic of Iran, Tunisia and India, as well as by the observers for Yemen, the Gambia (on behalf of the Group of African States), the United States, Mauritania, Papua New Guinea (on behalf of Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, the Federated States of Micronesia,

Nauru, New Zealand, Palau, the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu), Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Hungary and the Sudan.

109. The observer for the Holy See also made a statement.

5. Documents considered by the Commission on the Status of Women

110. At its 13th meeting, on 23 March, the Commission decided to take note of a number of documents before it under agenda items 3 and 5 (see chap. I, sect. D, decision 62/101).

Chapter IV
Communications concerning the status of women

111. The Commission considered item 4 of its agenda at its 12th (closed) meeting, on 21 March. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women (see para. 113 below);[1]

(b) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the list of confidential communications and replies by Governments concerning the status of women (E/CN.6/2018/R.1 and E/CN.6/2018/R.1/Add.1).

Action taken by the Commission
Report of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women

112. At its 12th (closed) meeting, on 21 March, the Commission considered the report of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women.

113. At the same (closed) meeting, the Commission decided to take note of the report of the Working Group and to incorporate it into the report of the Commission on its sixty-second session. The report of the Working Group read as follows:

1. The Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women met in closed meetings before the sixty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2002/235 and was guided in its deliberations by the mandate given to it by the Council in its resolution 76 (V), as amended by the Council in its resolutions 304 I (XI), 1983/27, 1992/19, 1993/11 and 2009/16.

2. The Working Group considered the list of confidential communications and the replies by Governments thereon (E/CN.6/2018/R.1 and E/CN.6/2018/R.1/Add.1). There was no list of non-confidential communications concerning the status of women, no such communications having been received by the Secretary-General.

3. The Working Group considered the 25 confidential communications, addressed to 22 States, received directly by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women). The Working Group noted that no confidential communications concerning the status of women had been received from other United Nations bodies or the specialized agencies.

4. The Working Group noted that there were 13 replies from 12 Governments.

5. The Working Group recalled its mandate as defined in paragraph 4 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/27, in which it was stated that the Working Group should perform the following functions:

(a) Consideration of all communications, including the replies of Governments thereon, if any, with a view to bringing to the attention of the Commission those communications, including the replies of Governments, that appeared to reveal a consistent pattern of reliably attested injustice and discriminatory practices against women;

[1] The report was also circulated internally among the members of the Commission under document symbol E/CN.6/2018/R.2.

(b) Preparation of a report, based on its analysis of the confidential and non-confidential communications, that would indicate the categories in which communications were most frequently submitted to the Commission.

6. The Working Group noted that a number of communications of a general nature had been submitted, as had communications alleging specific cases of discrimination against individual women and girls.

7. The Working Group discerned the following categories in which communications had most frequently been submitted to the Commission:

(a) Sexual violence against women and girls, including rape, and trafficking in women and girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation and forced prostitution;

(b) Other forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, targeted killings of women, death threats, trafficking in women and girls, including for the purpose of forced labour and slavery, and harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation and child and forced marriage;

(c) Physical and sexual violence, torture, harassment and threats of detention and imprisonment by law enforcement officials, lack of due process and delays in proceedings, and failure to grant a fair trial and prevent impunity;

(d) Inadequate conditions for women in detention and penitentiary systems, including a lack of proper bathroom facilities, basic health care and separate sections for adolescent girls, degrading treatment and torture of and physical and sexual violence against those women;

(e) Systematic violations of the human rights of women and girls, including discrimination, harassment, sexual violence and impunity, some of which target vulnerable and marginalized groups, namely, pregnant girls and women belonging to ethnic and/or religious minorities;

(f) Killings, death threats, extortion, intimidation, abduction, kidnapping, rape, torture, ill-treatment, harassment, travel bans, asset freeze orders, arrest warrants, censure, arbitrary detention of and violence, including sexual violence, against women human rights defenders, some of which also target their family members, as a means of exerting pressure on them to stop their activities;

(g) Violations of the right to health, including sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights, as stipulated in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;

(h) Inadequate institutions, and implementation and/or enforcement of laws aimed at promoting and protecting women's human rights that is ineffective or lacking;

(i) Legislation, policies and/or stereotypical practices and attitudes that discriminate against women in the areas of:

(i) Civil and political rights;

(ii) Economic, social and cultural rights;

(iii) Issuance of birth certificates and national identity documents;

(iv) Freedom of opinion and expression;

(v) Freedom of movement;

(vi) Right to own and inherit property;

(vii) Family, marriage and guardianship;

(viii) Access to education;

(ix) Health care;

(x) Access to justice;

(xi) Punishment for rape;

(j) Failure by States to adequately:

(i) Combat stereotypes of women, including in the media, and exercise due diligence to prevent violence and discrimination against women and girls;

(ii) Investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators adequately and in a timely manner, resulting in impunity;

(iii) Provide protection and support for victims;

(iv) Ensure access to justice;

(v) Ensure equal opportunities for women and girls.

8. During its consideration of all communications, including the replies of Governments thereon, and its consideration of the question of whether any of those appeared to reveal a consistent pattern of reliably attested injustice and discriminatory practices against women, the Working Group expressed its concern about:

(a) Violence against women and girls, including rape and other forms of sexual violence, torture and targeted killings, trafficking in women and girls and harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation and child and forced marriage, and their adverse effects on the full enjoyment by women and girls of all fundamental rights;

(b) Violations of the right of women to health, including sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights, as stipulated in the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and discrimination against women in access to health care;

(c) The persistence of gender stereotypes, including in laws, policies and practices;

(d) The continued existence of legislation and or practices in many areas that discriminated against women or had the effect of discriminating against women, ineffective or insufficient implementation of existing laws aimed at protecting and promoting the human rights of women and the lack of such laws, notwithstanding States' international obligations and commitments;

(e) Discrimination and violence against vulnerable and marginalized groups of women and girls;

(f) Killings, violence, harassment and detention of women human rights defenders, some of which also target their family members;

(g) Persistent impunity and abuse of power, including where discrimination and violence against women, including sexual violence, were perpetrated or condoned by law enforcement personnel;

(h) The failure by States to adequately exercise due diligence in order to prevent all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls and to investigate and prosecute such crimes, punish perpetrators and provide protection and assistance to victims.

9. The Working Group expressed appreciation for the cooperation extended by the Governments that had submitted replies or clarifying observations with regard to the communications received, recognizing their importance. Expressing concern about the continuing gap between the number of communications and the number of replies received, the Working Group called upon all Governments that had not done so to make such submissions in the future. The Working Group considered such cooperation essential for the effective discharge of its duties. From the replies received, the Working Group was encouraged to note that Governments had explained their positions, carried out investigations into the allegations made and/or taken measures, such as improving the enforcement of existing legislation, introducing programmes and services to better protect and assist women, including women who were victims of violence, prosecuting and punishing perpetrators of violence and making efforts to guarantee the full enjoyment of human rights by women, in accordance with relevant international standards.

Chapter V

Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions

114. At its 12th meeting, on 21 March, the Commission considered item 5 of its agenda. It had before it the following documents:

(a) Letter dated 11 December 2017 from the President of the Economic and Social Council to the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women (E/CN.6/2018/10);

(b) Note by the Secretariat on the input to the work of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development (E/CN.6/2018/11).

115. At the same meeting, on the proposal of the Chair, the Commission took note of the documents (see chap. I, sect. D, decision 62/101).

Chapter VI

Provisional agenda for the sixty-third session of the Commission

116. At its 13th meeting, on 23 March, the Commission considered item 6 of its agenda. It had before it the provisional agenda and documentation for its sixty-third session (E/CN.6/2018/L.2).

117. At the same meeting, the Commission approved the provisional agenda and documentation for its sixty-third session and recommended them to the Economic and Social Council for adoption (see chap. I, sect. C).

Chapter VII
Adoption of the report of the Commission on its sixty-second session

118. At the 13th meeting, on 23 March, the Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur (Kenya) introduced the draft report of the Commission on its sixty-second session, as contained in document E/CN.6/2018/L.1.

119. At the same meeting, the Commission adopted the draft report on its sixty-second session and entrusted the Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur with its finalization.

Chapter VIII
Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

120. The Commission on the Status of Women held its sixty-second session at United Nations Headquarters on 24 March 2017 and from 12 to 23 March 2018. The Commission held 13 meetings (1st to 13th).

B. Attendance

121. The session was attended by representatives of 45 States members of the Commission. Observers for other States Members of the United Nations and for non-member States, representatives of organizations of the United Nations system and of intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations also attended.

C. Election of officers

122. The following officers were elected at the 1st meeting of the sixty-second session, on 24 March 2017, and at the 2nd meeting, on 12 March 2018, to serve on the Bureau of the Commission at its sixty-second session:

Chair:
Geraldine Byrne Nason (Ireland)

Vice-Chairs:
Shah Asif Rahman (Bangladesh)
Rena Tasuja (Estonia)
Mauricio Carabali Baquero (Colombia)

Vice-Chair-cum-Rapporteur:
Koki Muli Grignon (Kenya)

D. Agenda and organization of work

123. At its 2nd meeting, on 12 March 2018, the Commission adopted its agenda, as contained in document E/CN.6/2018/1. The agenda read as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century":
   (a) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives:
      (i) Priority theme: challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls;
      (ii) Review theme: participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communications technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women;

(b) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men;

(c) Gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters.

4. Communications concerning the status of women.

5. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions.

6. Provisional agenda for the sixty-third session of the Commission.

7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its sixty-second session.

124. At the same meeting, the Commission approved its organization of work, as contained in document E/CN.6/2018/1/Add.1.

E. Documentation

125. The list of documents before the Commission at its sixty-second session is available from www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw62-2018/official-documents.

18-05185 (E) 010518